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very plainly the constitution of a local group, consisting as it does of a few families. Each group seems to have contained, on an average, about ten families, with a few unmarried males and females.

The Andaman Islanders depend for their subsistence entirely on the natural products of the sea and the forest. From the sea they obtain dugong, turtle (both green and hawksbill), an enormous variety of different sorts of fish, crustaceans (crabs, crayfish and prawns) and molluscs. Fish and crabs are also to be found in the salt-water creeks which in many places penetrate inland for some miles. From the forest they obtain the flesh of the wild pig, wild honey, and a large number of vegetable foods—roots, fruits, and seeds.

The life of the forest folk is more simple and uniform than that of the coast people and we may therefore consider it first. During the rainy season, which lasts from the middle of May to the end of September, the local group lives at its headquarters camp, which, as we have seen, formerly often took the form of a communal hut. During this season animal food is plentiful, as the jungle animals are in good condition; on the other hand there is not much vegetable food to be obtained. The following brief account will give an idea of how the day is spent in such a camp at that time of year. Some time after sunrise the camp begins to be astir. The various members of the community make a meal of any food that may have been saved from the day before. The men start off for the day's hunting. At the present time dogs are used for pig-hunting. These dogs were obtained in the first instance from the Settlement of Port Blair, and their use in pig-hunting was learnt from the Burmese convicts. Nowadays every married man has at least one dog[1]. Before the dogs were obtained, hunting was a pursuit requiring a great deal more skill than it does at present. A hunting party consists of from two to five men. Each man carries his bow and two or three pig arrows, and one of the party carries a smouldering fire-brand. They make their way through the jungle until they find the fresh tracks of a pig, or follow up some of the usual pig runs

[1] In the North Andaman the times before the Settlement are spoken of as the time when there were no dogs, *Bibi poiye*="Dog not."

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is to be seen but the dim light of the little fires burning in each hut or in each of the family quarters. 512

On a day when there is plenty of food left from the day before, or on a day of stormy weather even when food is not too plentiful, the men may remain in camp instead of going hunting. They busy themselves with making weapons and implements, such as bows, arrows, adzes, etc.

On occasions when game is not very plentiful a party of hunters may stay away from the camp for a few days, not returning till they have been successful in obtaining a fair supply of food. The women and children and old men, with perhaps a few of the able bodied men also, remain at home and provide for themselves as well as they can, the women devoting their time to collecting what vegetable foods are in season.

At the end of the rainy season there comes a brief period of unsettled weather, called by the natives of the North Andaman *Kimil*, and by those of the South, *Gumul*. During this season some of the vegetable foods begin to be available, though not in any quantities. At this time of the year the natives are able to obtain and feast upon what they regard as great delicacies, the larvae of the cicada and of the great capricornis beetle. The cool season, when fruits and roots are plentiful, begins at the end of November. The forest dwellers leave their main encampment during this season. Some of them go off to pay visits to their friends of other local groups. Such visits may last two or three months. Those who remain occupy temporary camps in convenient places. The men join the women in looking for roots and fruits, and do not spend so much of their time in hunting. Some of the men visit the main camp at intervals of a few days to see that it is all right. As the cool season gives way to the hot season (March to May) honey begins to be plentiful. At that time hunting for pig is almost abandoned. The pigs are in poor condition, and even when one is killed it is often left in the jungle by the natives as not being good enough to eat. On the other hand everyone is busy collecting honey. This is work in which both men and women join, though it is the men who climb up the trees and cut down the honeycomb. The natives have no means of keeping the honey for more than

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221 222 262 a very short time, as it rapidly ferments. While it is plentiful they almost live on it, supplementing it with roots and fruits and with fish, if they are near a creek. Towards the end of the hot season the fruit of the *Artocarpus chaplasha*, which is a favourite food of the natives, becomes ripe. The men and women, at this time, spend much of their time collecting the fruit. When it is collected the fruit is broken open and each of the seeds is sucked to obtain the juicy pulp or aril with which it is surrounded, and which has a very pleasant taste. The seeds are then partly boiled and are buried in the ground to remain there for a few weeks, when they will be dug up again and cooked and eaten. Any natives who may have been away from home on a visit, return before the *Artocarpus* comes into fruit in order to take their share in collecting it and providing a supply of the seeds for consumption in the rainy season. The natives then return to the headquarters camp and make any necessary repairs to the hut in preparation for the rainy season, which begins about the middle of May.

221 262 The coast-dwellers are not quite so much influenced by the seasons as the forest-dwellers. They can fish and collect molluscs all the year round. In the rainy season they divide their time between hunting pig in the forest and fishing or turtle hunting. They do not need, however, to remain at the same camp during the whole of the rainy season, but after a month or two at one place can move to what they hope to find better hunting grounds. During the cool and hot seasons they pay visits to one another. In the fine weather the men often go off on turtle-hunting expeditions for several days, leaving the women and children and older men in the village, where they provide for themselves with vegetable food and with fish and molluscs from the reefs.

000 It is during the fine weather that there take place the meetings of two or more local groups that are an important feature of the social life of the Andaman Islanders. These meetings will be described later in the present chapter.

462 Besides their food, which they must find from day to day, the natives have need of nothing save their weapons and implements. Of these each person makes his own, each man making his

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It is not pretended that this division of social customs into three different kinds is of any great or permanent value, and it is only introduced as an aid to the exposition of the customs of the Andamanese. It will be argued in a later chapter that many of the customs described in the present chapter have a common psychological basis.

Of any customs in connection with the birth of children I was able to learn very little, as no births at which I could be present occurred during my stay at the islands. Earlier writers have given very little information on this subject.

During the latter part of the period of pregnancy, and for about a month after the birth of the child, the mother and father must observe certain restrictions. In particular there are certain foods that they may not eat. The statements of different informants on this matter did not quite agree with each other, and it seems that there were slightly different rules in different tribes. According to an *Akar-Bale* informant the man and woman may not eat dugong, honey and yams; they may eat the flesh of small but not of full-grown pigs and turtle. An informant of one of the Northern tribes said that the woman may not eat full-grown pig, *Paradoxurus*, turtle, dugong, the fish *komar*, monitor lizard, honey and yams; her husband may eat these things but must carefully avoid eating certain fishes.

The natives give two different reasons for these rules. One is that if these foods be eaten by the parents the child will be ill. The other is that the parents themselves will be ill. The latter is the explanation most commonly offered.

The baby is named some time before it is born, and from that time the parents are not addressed or spoken of by name. For example, if the name chosen be *Rea*, the father will be spoken of as *Rea aka-mai* (Rea's father) instead of by his own name. The mother may be referred to as *Rea it-pet*, from the word *it-pet* meaning "belly." This practice is continued till some weeks after the birth, when the use of the names of the parents is once more resumed.

In child-birth the woman is assisted by the matrons of the camp. She is seated in her hut in the village on fresh leaves, and a piece of wood is placed at her back for her to lean against.

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whole night till he is tired. As soon as morning breaks he is made to bathe in the sea for two hours or so. He is then seated in some convenient place, not in a hut. The boy kneels down and bends forward till his elbows rest on the ground in front. One of the older men takes a pig-arrow and with the sharpened blade makes a series of cuts on the boy's back. Each cut is horizontal, and they are arranged in three vertical rows, each row consisting of from 20 to 30 cuts. When the cutting is finished the boy sits up, with a fire at his back, until the bleeding stops. During the operation and for a few hours following it the boy must remain silent. There is no treatment of the wounds to produce raised scars. The scars are much more noticeable on some men than on others.

The boy does not receive a new name on this occasion, but for a few weeks his own name is dropped and he is addressed and spoken of as *Ejido*. From this time the boy is described as being *oko-taliŋ-kolọt*, this being the masculine term corresponding to *aka-ndu-kolọt* for giris. From the time the cuts are made on his back the boy becomes *aka-op* and is under certain restrictions as to what foods he may eat.

When the wounds on his back are thoroughly healed similar cuts are made on his chest. I found a certain number of men who had no visible scars on their chests, but in the North Andaman every man has the three rows of scars on his back. Some of the women of the North Andaman have similar scars on their chests and a very few have them also on the back. These scars on women are not regularly made as part of the initiation ceremonies, and may be made after the woman has been married for some years.

During the period that a boy or girl is *aka-op* he or she is required by the customs of the tribe to abstain from eating certain foods. The exact rules in this matter differ from tribe to tribe. More particularly there are important differences between the coast-dwellers on the one hand and the jungle-dwellers on the other. The general principle, however, is in all cases the same. The boy (or girl) must abstain from all the chief foods of the people, and since he could not abstain from them all at one time without starving, he takes them in

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turn. It is in the order in which the different foods are forbidden that the chief differences occur.

In the *Aka-Čari* tribe of the North Andaman, where all are coast-dwellers, the boy or girl, during the first part of the *aka-op* period must not eat turtle, dugong, porpoise, *komar* (a fish), hawksbill turtle, the two kinds of edible grubs (*pata* and *čokele*), the monitor lizard, the flying fox (*Pteropus*), certain birds (perhaps all birds), certain shell-fish, the four varieties of mangrove seed (*kao*, *čimi*, *ǩabal* and *kaplo*), three edible roots (*mino*, *labo* and *mikulu*), and a large number of other vegetable foods, including *ŋitok*, *poroto* (if cooked, but it may be eaten raw), *bijo*, *čoroŋo*, *celet*, *buroŋ*, *bui*, *bakle*, *čo*, *čatali*, and *kata*. A certain number of fishes must be added to this list. This period is brought to a end by the turtle-eating ceremony which will be presently described. After this ceremony, turtle, which is one of the chief foods of the *Aka-Čari*, may be eaten, although certain parts of the turtle (such as the intestinal fat) are still forbidden, and the youth is also allowed to eat many of the other foods previously forbidden. On the other hand he is now required not to eat pork and a number of other foods both animal and vegetable. During this second period certain minor ceremonies take place, as for instance on the first occasion on which turtle's eggs are eaten. This period is brought to an end by the pig-eating ceremony. After that the youth is again free to eat pork. As turtle and pork are the two most important foods the ceremonies and observances in connection with these occupy a position of greater importance. After the pig-eating ceremony the youth is made free of one food after another, until some time after he is married he becomes free to partake of any of the foods available. In the case of some of the more important foods, such as honey, dugong, porpoise, the fish *komar*, etc., there is a sort of minor ceremony. The only ceremonies of any great importance in this tribe are the turtle-eating and the pig-eating ceremonies.

In the forest-dwelling communities of the North Andaman things are necessarily different. These people only eat such foods as turtle, dugong, etc. when they are visiting their friends on the coast. The three most important ceremonies amongst these people are the *ńyuri*-eating, the pig-eating and the

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honey-eating ceremonies. (The *ńyuri* is a fish that is found in the creeks.) According to my informants of the *Aka-Bo* tribe the foods that must be avoided during the first part of the abstention period are all species of fish found in inland creeks (*ńyuri*, *burto*, *bari*, *bol*, *kuato*), the monitor lizard, sucking-pig, two species of snake (*or-čubi* and *uluku-čubi*), a number of vegetable foods and also honey. After the *ńyuri*-eating ceremony the different kinds of fish mentioned may be eaten, but the youth or girl must then abstain from pork.

These examples, without entering into further details, will suffice to show what is the nature of the *aka-op* period. During that period the youth must abstain for a certain length of time from each one of the more important foods of his community. After a certain period of abstention he is permitted to eat the particular food. On each occasion of thus eating a food for the first time after the abstention, there are certain ritual customs that must be observed, and these customs are more important in some cases (such as pig, turtle and honey) than in others. In the case of some of the foods the only ritual observed is that the food must be given by an older man, who is himself free to eat it, that it must be eaten in silence, and that the man must be painted afterwards with clay (*odu*). In the case of pork and turtle, however, there are fairly elaborate ceremonies. The ceremonies are very similar in different parts of the islands. The description given below applies to the coast-dwellers of the North Andaman. In these communities the period of abstention from turtle and other foods begins in the case of a girl at the first menstruation, and in the case of a boy when his back is cut. It may last only one year or several years, according to circumstances, and is brought to a close by the turtle-eating ceremony. The details of this are exactly the same in the case of a girl and a boy.

When the older men decide that it is time for a boy who has been abstaining from turtle to be released from the restriction, a turtle-hunting expedition is arranged, and this is continued until a fair number of good turtle are captured. The best of these is selected, killed, and cooked. The youth is seated in a hut, either that of his parents, or one placed at his disposal by

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881 262 a friend or one specially built[1]. All his ornaments are removed. (In the case of a girl one belt of *Pandanus* leaf is retained.) He is seated on leaves of the *Hibiscus tiliaceus*, or if these be not obtainable, on those of the *Myristica longifolia*, and a bundle of the same leaves is placed under his folded arms so as to cover his belly, while another bundle is placed at his back where there is some sort of rest provided for him to lean against. He must sit still with folded arms and with legs stretched out in front, the two big toes clasping each other. He sits facing towards the open sea, and a fire is placed near him, generally just beyond his feet.

Some man is chosen to take charge of the ceremony. This may be one of the older men of the community to which the youth belongs or a distinguished visitor, if there be any such present in the camp at the time. This man selects some of the meat and fat of the cooked turtle, placing them in a wooden dish. He comes to where the youth is seated, while the friends and relatives gather round. Taking some of the fat he rubs it first over the lips and then over the whole body of the youth, while the female relatives of the latter sit near and weep loudly. When the youth's body is thoroughly covered with fat the man who is performing the ceremony takes some burnt oxide of iron, such as is used for making red paint, and rubs it over the youth's whole body, except the hair of his head. He then takes a piece of turtle fat and places it in the youth's mouth, feeding him thus with a few mouthfuls which the youth eats in silence. At this point the weeping of the relatives is taken up again with renewed vigour and then gradually comes to an end. Having fed the youth the man then proceeds to massage him. He first stands behind him and placing his hands on his shoulders presses down on them with all his weight. Then he seizes a roll of flesh on each side of the youth's belly and shakes it up and down as though to shake down what has been eaten. The arms are next massaged and the wrists and knuckles are forcibly flexed so as to make the joints "crack." The legs are similarly massaged, either with the hands or with the feet, the performer

[1] There is no secrecy about any of the proceedings; the whole ceremony is performed in the village and may be witnessed by anybody.

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(in the latter case) standing on the outstretched legs of the youth and rolling the muscles beneath his feet[1]. The joints of the toes are forcibly bent with the hand to make them "crack" if possible. A mixture of clay (*odu*) and water has been prepared in a wooden dish. The performer dips his hands into this and spatters it over the youth's body from head to foot, either by holding his hands near the youth and clapping them together, or by jerking the clay off his fingers with a flicking motion. During the whole of these proceedings the youth sits passive and silent.

The first part of the ceremony is now over. The food tray containing turtle meat and fat, cut into small pieces, is placed beside the youth and he is provided with a skewer of the wood of the *Hibiscus tiliaceus*, as he may not touch the meat with his fingers. He must sit in the same position with legs outstretched and arms folded and surrounded with *Hibiscus* leaves. To feed himself he may unloose one arm, and when his legs are cramped he may double them up beneath him. He may not lie down nor speak nor sleep for 48 hours. During this period he may eat nothing but turtle and drink nothing but water[2]. The man in charge of the ceremony sits behind him and gives him instructions as to what foods he may and what he may not eat after the ceremony. Some of the men and women take it in turn to sit beside the youth, attending to his wants and talking or singing to keep him awake.

On the morning of the third day a belt and necklace are made of pieces of the creeper called *terkobito-balo*, i.e. "centipede creeper" (*Pothos scandens*), and these are placed round the youth's waist and neck. On this day he is permitted to sleep. Either on the same day, or early the next morning, he has a bath in the sea, to remove some of the red paint and clay, and he is then decorated with red paint made of red ochre and turtle fat, and with white clay (*tol-odu*). The red paint is put on in stripes over his body, and his ears are daubed with it. The white clay

[1] In the Southern tribes large stones are placed on the youth's thighs.

[2] In these days the natives are very fond of tea, which they obtain from the Andamanese Homes; during the ceremony described above the youth or girl is not permitted to drink tea.

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881 passed through the ceremony is said to be *aka-gumul*, and is addressed and spoken of, not by name, but by the term *Guma*[1].

881 262 In the coast-dwelling communities of the Northern tribes, the youth or girl who has passed through the turtle-eating ceremony is thereafter free to eat turtle flesh (though not the liver nor the intestinal fat of the turtle) and a certain number of the other foods that were previously forbidden. On the other hand, he or she is now forbidden to eat pork and a number of other foods which previously were permitted. The period during which these new prohibitions are in force may last for a few months or for a year or even longer. It is, however, generally shorter than the first period of abstention from turtle. It is brought to an end by a pig-eating ceremony which is similar in many ways to the turtle-eating ceremony already described. A boar must be killed if the initiate be a youth, or a sow if it be a girl who is to go through the ceremony. The youth is seated in a hut on leaves of the *čelmo* (*Tetranthera*) and the carcase of the boar is brought and pressed upon the youth's shoulders and back by one of the men. The girl is not treated in this way. The pork is then cooked and the youth is first anointed and then fed with some of the fat. He is then rubbed with red ochre, massaged and splashed with clay, just as in the turtle-eating ceremony. He must sit silent with arms crossed, and covered with *Tetranthera* leaves for a day and a night. During this time he may only eat pork, and must not touch his food with his hands but must use a skewer of *Tetranthera* wood. On the following day he is decorated with white clay (*tọl-odu*) and with red paint, and takes part in a dance. The dance is almost exactly the same as the dance on the occasion of the turtle-eating ceremony, the only differences being that instead of *Hibiscus* leaves those of the *Tetranthera* are used, and that the dancer does not leap with both feet from the ground, but raises one foot and stamps with it.

In the Northern tribes these are the two most important ceremonies. After the pig-eating ceremony the youth is free to eat pork and a certain number of previously forbidden foods.

[1] The meaning of the word *kimil* (or *gumul*) will be discussed in a later chapter.

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There remain a considerable number of foods, however, which he is still forbidden. In connection with each of these there is some sort of minor ceremony. The older men, when occasion arises, offer the youth or girl some of the forbidden food, first rubbing it over his or her mouth. The food is then eaten in silence. I only saw one such ceremony, when a man ate for the first time after his abstention the intestinal fat of the turtle. The man was about 24 years of age and had long since been through the chief ceremonies, and was married. The ceremony is perhaps more elaborate in the case of the similar first eating of honey, dugong and a few other foods. One after another of the food prohibitions is removed until the man or woman is free to eat anything. There is no regular order in which this takes place, as in each case it is determined by chance circumstances. The only order that is rigorously observed is that of the two chief ceremonies connected with pork and turtle. These two are the principal meat foods of the coast-dwellers.

The above description applies strictly only to the coast-dwellers of the North Andaman (*Aka-Čari*, *Aka-Jeru* and *Aka-Kora*). I was not able to see any ceremonies performed by the jungle-dwellers. The old men of the *Aka-Bo* tribe told me that the period of abstention begins when a boy or girl is forbidden to eat the fish *ńyuri* (*Plotosus sp.* probably *P. arab*), and a certain number of other foods, not including pork. The first ceremony is the eating of the *ńyuri*. The boy or girl is seated on leaves (*kibir* or *tare* or *ra-čiro*) and bundles of these are placed in his belt before and behind. A belt of *Pandanus* leaf is worn by the boys at this ceremony as well as by the girls. The initiate sits with his legs doubled up beneath him, and is fed with the fish. The ceremony lasts only one day. There is no special dance, but the initiate joins in an ordinary dance at the end of the ceremony, being decorated for this purpose with white clay. After this ceremony the youth must abstain from pork and other foods. The pig-eating ceremony, which closes this period of abstention, lasts altogether for three or four days, the initiate remaining awake for one night. The leaves used are the same as those of the first (fish-eating) ceremony. The third important ceremony of these communities is the

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honey-eating. The initiate sits cross-legged and honey is rubbed over his or her shoulders and chest, and he or she is fed with it.

I was told by one of my informants that in the *Aka-Kede* tribe the pig-eating ceremony precedes the turtle-eating, but I could not obtain reliable information about the ceremonies of this tribe.

My informants of the *Akar-Bale* tribe, which consists of coast-dwelling communities only, told me that the period of abstention begins with turtle, honey, turtle's eggs, yams, and a number of fruits and seeds. This period lasts for three or four years. Then comes the turtle-eating ceremony, which is said to be similar in its details to that already described from the North Andaman. After this ceremony the initiate may not eat dugong, porpoise and a considerable number of fishes (including *Tetrodon sp.*, *Plotosus sp.*, *Anguilla bengalensis*, *Trygon bleekari*, *T. siphen*, *Urogymnus asperrimus*, *Carcharias gangeticus*, etc.). He must also abstain from turtle's eggs, pig, yams, honey, and certain fruits (e.g. *Artocarpus chaplasha*, *Mimusops littoralis*, *Baccaurea sapida*, etc.). A few months after the turtle-eating ceremony there is a minor ceremony of eating turtle's eggs, the eggs being eaten in silence and the meal followed by a dance. After another period follows the ceremony of eating pig's kidney-fat. Then, as opportunity occurs, the initiate eats dugong, honey and the other forbidden foods, one after another. The ceremony in each case is not elaborate except in connection with such important foods as dugong and honey.

Mr E. H. Man has given a description of the ceremonies of the *Aka-Bea* tribe, which shows that they are essentially similar to those of the North. He does not distinguish between the ceremonies of the *aryoto* (coast-dwellers) and those of the *eremtaga* (jungle-dwellers). He states that the fasting period (*aka-yaba*) is divided into three parts, the first ending with the *yadi-* (turtle) *gumul*, the second with the *aja-* (honey) *gumul*, and the third with the *reg-jiri-* (kidney-fat of pig) *gumul*.

As I was not able to witness the honey-eating ceremony, I venture to reproduce below the description that Mr Man gives of this ceremony as it is conducted in the *Aka-Bea* tribe.

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"When the honey fast is to be broken a quantity of honey-combs, according to the number assembled, are on the appointed day procured: the *aka-yab* being placed in the midst of the group, the chief or other elder goes to him with a large honey-comb wrapped in leaves; after helping the novice to a large mouthful, which he does by means of a bamboo or iron knife, he presents the remainder to him, and then leaves him to devour it in silence: this he does, not, however, by the ordinary method, for it is an essential part of the ceremony that he should not use his fingers to break off pieces, but eat it bear-fashion, by holding the comb up to his mouth and attacking it with his teeth and lips. After satisfying his present requirements, he wraps what is left of the comb in leaves for later consumption. The chief then takes another comb and anoints the youth by squeezing it over his head, rubbing the honey well into his body as it trickles down. The proceedings at this stage are interrupted by a bath, in order to remove all traces of the honey, which would otherwise be a source of considerable inconvenience by attracting ants. Beyond the observance of silence, and continued abstention from *reg-jiri* (pig's kidney-fat), the youth is under no special restrictions, being able to eat, drink and sleep as much as he pleases. Early the following morning the lad decorates himself with leaves of a species of *Alpinia*, called *jini*[1], and then, in the presence of his friends, goes into the sea (or, if he be an *eremtaga*, into a creek) up to his waist, where, locking his thumbs together, he splashes as much water as possible over himself and the by-standers, occasionally ducking his head under the surface as well. This is considered a safeguard or charm against *snakes*, and the onlookers cry "*ọto-pedike, kinig wara-jobo lọtike*" (Go and splash yourself, or *Wara-jobo*[2] will get inside you), for they imagine that unless they go through this splashing performance, this snake will by some means enter their stomachs and so cause death. The only difference between the sexes with respect to the *aja-gumul* is that with females it cannot take place until

[1] This plant is selected because it is associated with honey-gathering; its bitter sap, being extremely obnoxious to bees, is smeared over their persons when taking a comb, and enables them to escape scot free with their prize. (Note by Mr Man.)

[2] This is believed to be the *Ophiophagus elaps*. (Note by Mr Man.)

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after the birth of the first child; they are also required to abstain from honey during each subsequent pregnancy; and in their case, too, a chief or elder (preferably a relative) officiates, and not a woman[1]."

We may now proceed to the ritual customs connected with death and burial. In all the Great Andaman tribes disease and death are supposed to be due to the spirits of the jungle and the sea. The subject will be dealt with in the next chapter.

On the occurrence of a death the news quickly spreads through the camp, and all the women collect round the body and, sitting down, weep loudly until they are exhausted. The women then retire and the men come and weep over the corpse. All the adult members of the community then proceed to cover themselves with a wash of common clay smeared evenly over their bodies and limbs. This clay is of the kind called *odu* in *Aka-Jeru* and *og* in *Aka-Bea*. The nearer relatives and more intimate friends of the deceased also plaster some of the same clay on their heads.

Some of the women, generally, but not necessarily, relatives, remove any ornaments the dead person may have been wearing, shave the head and decorate the body. This decoration consists of lines of fine pattern in white clay alternating with bands of red paint. A band of red paint is placed across the upper lip passing from ear to ear and the ears themselves are smeared with the pigment. The greater the estimation in which the deceased person is held the greater is the care lavished upon this the last decoration.

Thus decorated the body is prepared for burial. The legs and arms are flexed so that the knees come up under the chin and the fists rest against the cheeks. A *Cyrena* shell (or sometimes in these days a steel knife) is placed in the closed hand. A sleeping mat is wrapped round the body, and over this a number of the large palm leaves known as *kobo* (*Aka-Jeru*) are arranged and the whole is made into a bundle and tied up with rope. Before the ropes are all tied the relatives of the dead person take their last farewell by gently blowing on the face of the corpse.

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 133.

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535 "the shedding of tears." The object of this ceremony is to release the mourners from the restrictions that they have had to observe. The ceremony takes place in the evening, and an occasion is chosen when there are plenty of people in the camp. The mourners, male and female, remove the *odu* clay from their foreheads and decorate themselves with red paint and white clay in the way described in connection with dancing. They also put on what ornaments of *Pandanus* leaf or netting and *Dentalium* shell they may possess or be able to borrow. When all the members of the camp are assembled around the dancing ground one of the male mourners takes his stand at the sounding-board and sings a song. This song does not refer in any way to the dead man or woman; it is just an ordinary song of hunting or canoe-cutting or any other subject, though it may have been specially composed for the occasion. Those women who are not in mourning sit near the singer and take up the chorus. When the song is fairly started the mourners, male and female, begin to dance. There is nothing special about the dance, which is exactly like any other dance. After dancing for a short time the mourners seat themselves at one end of the dancing ground and their friends begin to weep and wail. Everybody present joins in the lamentation until they are tired. The mourners then rise and again dance. After a time the women retire and seat themselves with the chorus, but the men continue the dance (in which they are joined by the other men present), till they are tired, which often means till near dawn. After this ceremony the mourners are free to eat any of the foods up till then forbidden, and are free once more to use red paint and white clay and to take their part in all dances and other festivities.

• 262 It has been seen from the preceding descriptions that the Andamanese have a number of ritual customs relating to food. There are certain occasions in the life of every individual when he or she must abstain from eating certain foods. A person mourning for the death of a relative is subjected to restrictions of this kind, and so are the parents of a new-born child for a short period before and after the birth. A woman must not eat certain things when she is menstruating. Restrictions

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as to diet are imposed by custom on all persons who are ill. 262 ●
The most important restrictions, however, are those imposed on every boy and girl during the period of adolescence. During this period of life, as we have seen, the initiate is required to abstain for a longer or shorter period from all the most important foods of the Andamanese.

Mr Man states that "every Andamanese man or woman is prohibited all through life from eating some one (or more) fish or animal: in most cases the forbidden dainty is one which in childhood was observed (or imagined) by the mother to occasion some functional derangement; when of an age to understand it the circumstance is explained, and cause and effect being clearly demonstrated, the individual in question thenceforth considers that particular meat his *yat-tub*, and avoids it carefully. In cases where no evil consequences have resulted from partaking of any kind of food, the fortunate person is privileged to select his own *yat-tub*, and is of course shrewd enough to decide upon some fish, such as shark or skate, which is little relished, and to abstain from which consequently entails no exercise of self-denial[1]."

Although I made repeated enquiries amongst the natives of both the North and the South Andaman I was not able to confirm this observation of Mr Man. It is quite true that if a certain food is observed to disagree with a child he or she is taught to avoid that food for the rest of life, but it is not necessary for every person to have some forbidden food. Many men told me that they were under no such prohibition and might eat any food they liked, apart from the restrictions on special occasions. On a minor point it may be noted that skate and even shark are not by any means so little relished as the statement of Mr Man would imply. The liver of skates and rays, and even the liver of sharks is rather regarded as a delicacy.

I noticed on several occasions that men would not eat certain foods when they were away from their own part of the islands.

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 354. Mr Man adds in a note that "it is believed that *Puluga* would punish severely any person who might be guilty of eating his *yat-tub*, either by causing his skin to peel off (*wainyabe*) or by turning his hair white and flaying him alive." On *Puluga* see later, Chaps. III and IV.

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262 Thus one man of the North Andaman told me that he would not eat dugong when he was with me in the South Andaman. Another said that though he would eat the fish *komar* when he was at home, he would not eat it when he was in a strange place, as at the Settlement of Port Blair, for fear that it would make him ill.

In the North Andaman I was told that when a dugong is caught and the people feast on it they do not leave the camp till some hours after the meat is all finished, either to go fishing or hunting. The reason they give for this is that the spirits of the jungle and the sea may smell them, attracted by the odour of the food they have eaten and may cause them to be ill. They therefore remain in the camp and eat up all the dugong and do not venture out till they begin to feel hungry and must go in search of food. I believe that the same custom is observed in the South Andaman also.

A few other customs connected with food may be mentioned here. There is only one way in which a turtle may be killed[1]. It must be laid on its back with its head pointing towards the open sea, and a skewer of wood is then thrust through the eye-socket into the brain. The natives say that if a turtle were killed in any other way than this, the meat would be "bad," i.e., uneatable.

252 262 Turtle meat may only be cooked on a fire of the wood of the *Hibiscus tiliaceus*.

A pig is killed as it runs, without ceremony, but there is one special way in which it must be cut up. The pig is first disembowelled, and the joints of the legs are severed. The abdominal cavity is then filled with leaves, of which only certain special kinds are used. It is placed on a fire and roasted whole, and is then cut up. Should the carcase be cut up by any other than the traditional method, the natives believe that the meat would be "bad," and they would not eat it.

A number of beliefs relating to vegetable foods will be mentioned in the next chapter.

576 201 In several of the ceremonies described in this chapter it will be noticed that the weeping of relatives and friends occurs

[1] Turtle are captured alive by means of harpoons, and may be kept alive several days before they are killed and eaten.

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the person who has eaten food will, unless he takes certain precautions, be liable to be ill. Now sickness is believed to be caused by the spirits of the jungle and the sea, and therefore an alternative or equivalent statement of the same belief is that after a person has eaten food he is in danger from the spirits. We may therefore conclude that the word *ot-kimil*, when it is used to describe the condition of a person who has eaten food, denotes simply this condition of danger, and nothing more. For this we shall find ample confirmation later on. Subject to such later confirmation I will here state what has been maintained, which is (1) that the *era-puli* patterns are to be explained as being protective, (2) that the eating of food is regarded as dangerous, and (3) that this danger is associated in the minds of the natives with sickness and with the spirits. It will be convenient to leave the first of these three propositions for later discussion and take up the second, seeking to find the meaning of this belief in the dangerous properties of food.

Not all foods are equally dangerous. I was able to establish roughly a sort of scale. The most dangerous foods are dugong, the fish called *komar*; some of the snakes; the internal fat such as the kidney-fat or the intestinal fat of pig, turtle, monitor lizard and *Paradoxurus*; the liver of sharks, sting-rays and *Plotosus*; and honey. Next in order come the flesh of pigs, turtle, monitor lizard and *Paradoxurus* and of the fishes mentioned above; also the eggs of turtle. To these should perhaps be added the edible grubs and some vegetable foods such as the yams and the *Artocarpus* fruit and seed. Lowest in the scale, that is, least dangerous, are molluscs and the commoner sorts of fish and vegetable foods.

The principles underlying this grading of foods are two. Those foods that are difficult or dangerous to procure are considered more dangerous than others. Thus all the fishes that are thought most dangerous to eat are actually dangerous, such as the sharks, the sting-rays, the armed *Plotosus*, and the fish *komar* that has a powerful spike on its head with which it can inflict a dangerous wound. Secondly the foods that are most prized are regarded as being more dangerous than those that are less prized. The internal fat of animals is regarded as a great delicacy and therefore occupies a high place in the scale. It is this also that explains

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the position of honey and of the edible grubs. The dugong, which is of all foods the most difficult and dangerous to procure, and is at the same time more highly prized than any other, is regarded as more dangerous to eat than any other.

It is this difference in the danger attributed to different foods that gives the clue to the explanation of the beliefs relating to them. The hypothesis I wish to put forward is that the custom of painting the body after eating food is an expression of the social value of food.

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In a simple community such as that of the Andaman Islands, in which the necessary food has to be provided from day to day, food occupies a predominant position, and is the chief source of those variations or oscillations between conditions of euphoria and dysphoria that constitute the emotional life of the society. Food is obtainable only by the expenditure of effort, and the effort is a communal one. The obtaining of food is the principal social activity and it is an activity in which every able-bodied member of the community is required by custom to join. A man's first duty to the society may be defined as the duty of providing food for himself and others, and no one is looked on with more contempt than one who is lazy or careless in this respect. On the contrary the man who stands highest in the esteem of others is the skilful hunter who is generous in distributing to others the food he obtains. The food provides the community with its chief joys and sorrows. When food is scarce the whole community suffers. The men spend all their time in hunting but are disappointed. They have to fall back upon foods that are little relished, such as the commoner kinds of molluscs. On the contrary when there is plenty of food the whole society rejoices together. Every one has as much as he or she can eat. Hunting and fishing become pleasant sports instead of arduous labour.

Viewing the matter from its relation to the feelings of the individual we may say that it is particularly in connection with food that he is made to feel that he is a member of the community, sharing with others their joys and sorrows, taking part in a common activity, often dependent upon others for the satisfaction of his hunger, and obliged by custom to share with those others what he himself obtains. Thus food is, for the Andaman Islander,

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the one object above all others that serves to awaken in him day after day the feeling of his relation to his fellows. It is also the source of a very large proportion of his joys and sorrows, his excitements and disappointments. Thus it is that when the natives wish to amuse each other it is by tales of hunting that they do so, and a large proportion of their songs relate to the getting of food.

It is thus clear that food becomes an important secondary object of the fundamental affective dispositions that regulate the emotional attitude of the individual to the society to which he belongs. It is connected very closely with the feeling of moral obligation; the most valued moral qualities in the Andaman Islands are energy in providing food and generosity in distributing it; among the worst faults are laziness in hunting and meanness in giving to others. Similarly food is closely associated with the feeling of dependence. During childhood, particularly, the individual has to depend on others for his food; even later in life the food that a man eats is more often provided by others than by himself; he depends on the community even for his daily nourishment.

Different foods have different social values. Thus a dugong provides a large supply of a highly-prized delicacy, but on the other hand can only be obtained by strenuous and dangerous efforts of skilful hunters. At the other end of the scale the social value of shell-fish is very little. They are not relished and are only eaten when there is nothing better, while the labour of obtaining them is simply one of drudgery requiring little skill.

Finally it must be pointed out that the value of food is both positive and negative. It is the source of conditions of social euphoria when it is plentiful; while it is equally the source of social dysphoria when it is lacking. In other words, on different occasions it is the source of both pleasurable and painful states of the fundamental social sentiments.

All these experiences connected with food organise themselves around the notion that foods, or the animals that are used for food, are things to be treated carefully, with respect, or, in other words, with ritual precautions. The sense of the social value of food reveals itself as a belief that food may be a source of danger

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unless it is approached with circumspection, and this belief, translated into action, gives rise to the rite of painting the body after eating. This does not mean that when the Andaman Islander eats turtle he is actually in a state of fear; he feels that he would have reason to be afraid if it were not that the society has provided him with a means of avoiding the dangers of turtle eating. What he does feel, then, as I have tried to show, is not a fear of food but a sense of the value of food.

This interpretation will, I hope, be amply justified later, and the psychological processes assumed by it will be further illustrated. One point needs to be emphasised here, namely that the suggested interpretation affords, as no other would seem to do, an explanation of the fact that some foods are believed to be more dangerous than others, and that while it is obligatory to paint the body after eating the more dangerous foods, it is not necessary to do so after eating those that are less dangerous. If the rite is simply the expression of the social value of foods, it will follow that different food substances, having different social values, must be subject to differences in ritual treatment.

There are a few other customs connected with food, recorded in an earlier chapter, which show that in general food is regarded as something that may only be approached with ritual precautions. A turtle must be killed with its head towards the open sea, and must be cut up in one particular way, otherwise the meat would be "bad." A pig must also be cut up in a particular way, and must be stuffed with certain leaves before it is roasted. A man will not eat certain foods when he is away from his own country, as he is afraid that to do so might make him ill. (This corresponds to the belief that there is less chance of illness in one's own country than away from it, and that the spirits of a strange place are more dangerous than those that haunt the jungles and the waters of a man's own home.) All these customs, I believe, are so many different expressions of the social value of food.

I have maintained earlier in the chapter that the sense of the social value of such things as fire and the materials used for weapons translates itself into the belief that these things afford protection against danger. This would seem, at first sight, to be

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contradicted by the explanation that I have just given of the belief in the danger of food. The apparent contradiction must be faced and resolved before we can proceed further.

First, it can be shown that the various things that are regarded as affording protection when used according to custom, are also believed to be dangerous, just in the same way that food is dangerous. One example of this will suffice. The fibre of the *Anadendron paniculatum*, which is used for bow-strings and other purposes, has been shown to possess a power which gives it efficacy against dangers of the sea such as sharks. This same power, however, may have injurious effects if the plant is handled without proper precautions. Thus, if a piece of the green creeper, or a person who has recently been handling it, should be in a canoe, it would be impossible to capture turtle from that canoe, as they would be driven away by the "smell" of the plant. If a piece of the creeper were burnt in the fire there would be a great storm, according to one statement, or all the turtle would be driven away from the vicinity, according to another. The handling of the plant in the preparation of the fibre, by scraping it on the thigh, is believed to be the cause of rheumatism. Turtle meat that might by accident come in contact with the plant would be dangerous and would therefore not be eaten. These different beliefs show us that while this plant possesses powers that make it of service to the society, both directly as a material for weapons, and indirectly as a magical protection against evil, it is also dangerous, i.e. it will produce undesirable effects unless treated with the proper ritual precautions.

Now just as materials such as the *Anadendron* are dangerous but may yet be used protectively, so it can be shown that the things used for food are also capable of affording protection against evil. It may be recalled that an important element of the treatment of sickness is by the use of special foods. Yams, honey, the fat of turtle and dugong and other foods are believed to possess curative properties. The flesh of the flying-fox is used as a remedy for rheumatism. But the clearest evidence is provided by the custom of wearing ornaments made of the bones of animals that have been eaten. These ornaments are believed to possess protective powers of the same kind as those attributed to

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human bones, but they are considered to be more particularly of value to the hunter when he is in the forest or on the sea. They are made chiefly from the bones of those animals that are believed to be most dangerous to eat. These animals are difficult and often dangerous to capture or kill. When obtained they become very important sources of well-being to the society. The Andamanese express their sense of the social value of these animals in the belief that it is necessary to adopt certain measures of ritual precaution in dealing with them. When these due precautions are taken, however, then the society is able to make use of the flesh to serve its own ends. So, when an animal has been eaten, and has thus been made to serve as a source of advantage, of strength, the bones, which are the permanent remains of the feast, acquire a symbolic value as evidence of past social well-being, and omens of future security. They are a visible proof of the ability of the society to protect itself and its members from the dangers that are believed to threaten the human being in the most important activity of his life, the obtaining and eating of food.

Formerly the Andamanese preserved the skulls of all large animals such as pigs, turtle and dugong. At the present day they no longer preserve the skulls of pigs, giving as their reason that owing to the dogs obtained from Europeans they now have little difficulty in killing pigs; but they still preserve the skulls of dugongs, and a fair proportion of the skulls of turtle. The *Jarawa* still seem to preserve with great care the skulls of all the pigs they kill, going to the pains of enclosing each one in a case of basket-work. These skulls, we must conclude, are more than mere trophies of the chase. As visible proofs of the ability of the society in the past to overcome the hostile powers of nature, they form, as it were, the guarantee of a similar ability in the future, and I believe that their preservation is regarded as a means of ensuring success in hunting as well as protection for the hunters. The turtle skulls that are often suspended under the forward platform of a canoe, are, I believe, intended both to protect the occupants of the canoe from the dangers of the sea and to help them to obtain a good catch.

The Andamanese belief in the power of the bones of animals

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to protect them from danger and to bring them luck, is therefore very similar to their belief in the protective power of the materials used for weapons and implements. The consideration of the apparent contradiction mentioned above has led us to a more exact statement of the real beliefs in these matters. They believe, we may say, that all the things from the jungle and the sea of which they make use as food or as materials, are dangerous unless approached with proper ritual precautions, but when so approached they become sources of strength and well-being and also of protection from unseen dangers.

To return to the main argument, which was concerned with the meaning of the patterns of clay painted on the body after eating the more dangerous foods, it would seem that this action is really a rite or ceremony, of the same general character as other ceremonial customs of the Andamans. It is an action required by custom, the performance of which on appropriate occasions serves to keep alive in the mind of the individual a certain system of sentiments necessary for the regulation of conduct in conformity to the needs of the society. By it the individual is made to feel (or to act as though he felt) that his life is one of continually repeated dangers from which he can only be preserved by conforming to the customs of the society as they have been handed down by tradition. He is made to feel that the eating of food is not merely the satisfaction of an animal appetite, but an act of communion, that the food itself is something "sacred" (if we may use that word in the sense of the original Latin "sacer"). It serves also, like any other rite in which all join, to make the individual feel the solidarity and unity of the community; all share in the common repast and the common danger, and each man sees on his neighbour the clay with which he himself is daubed.

Of course it is probable that the Andamanese custom of painting the body after eating, like our own grace before and after meat, with which it is parallel, tends to become a formality accompanied by little real feeling, but it can be shown, I believe, that such customs do possess a real value—a real psychological function—in keeping alive ideas and sentiments that will on occasion play an important part in influencing conduct.

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We have not yet completed the study of the Andamanese beliefs about food. To do so we must examine the initiation ceremonies. I hope to show that these ceremonies are the means by which the society powerfully impresses upon the initiate the sense of the social value of food, and keeps the same sense alive in the minds of the spectators of the ceremony.

The position in the social life occupied by a child is different from that of an adult; the child is dependent upon and closely united to his parents, and is not an independent member of the community. To this difference in social position there corresponds a difference in the attitude of a person towards a child and towards an adult, and also a difference in the attitude of a child and that of an adult towards the society. As the child grows up a change takes place in his position in the social life, and this must be accompanied by a change in the emotional dispositions of the child himself in so far as these regulate his attitude towards the society, and by a change in the attitude towards the child of the other members of the group. The initiation ceremonies are the means by which these changes are brought about, and by which, therefore, the child is made an independent member of the society.

The ceremonies have two aspects according as we regard them from the point of view of the society or from that of the initiate. For the society they are to be described as the recognition of the change of status of the initiate, just as the marriage ceremony is the social recognition of the change of status by marriage. For the initiate they constitute a sort of moral or social education.

To fit a child for his proper place in the community he needs to be educated. Part of the process consists of learning how to hunt, how to make bows and arrows, and so on. This necessary knowledge he acquires gradually by imitation of his elders, in which he is guided and encouraged by them. But in addition to this he has to acquire those sentiments or emotional dispositions which regulate the conduct of members of the society and constitute morality. Part of this education in morality, this education of the sentiments, takes place gradually as the child grows up, less by any actual instruction than by processes of imitation and suggestion; but in this connection an extremely important part is played by the initiation ceremonies. That the long series of

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abstentions and ceremonies does have a very powerful emotional effect on the youth or girl may be readily observed by an eye-witness; that their permanent effect is to create in his or her mind a number of sentiments that previously existed not at all or only in an undeveloped condition will be shown in the course of the present argument.

Since in the life of the Andamans by far the most important social activity is the getting of food, and it is in connection with food that the social sentiments are most frequently called into action, it is therefore appropriate that it should be through his relation to food that the child should be taught his relation to *the society, and thus have those sentiments implanted in him or* brought to the necessary degree of strength. During his infancy the child is almost entirely unrestrained and acts with great comparative freedom. He does not realise, in any adequate manner, that the food with which he is freely provided (for children are the last to suffer hunger) is only obtained by skill and effort, nor does he realise that he will one day be required to labour to supply food for others. There follows a period of restraint, during which the growing boy or girl has to give up eating certain relished foods, and has to pass through a number of ceremonies, some of them painful, and all solemn and awe-inspiring. These restraints on the action of the individual are not imposed by one person, but by the whole society backed by the whole force of tradition. Through a series of years, just at what is, for physiological reasons, the most impressionable age, the individual learns to subordinate his own desires to the requirements of the society or of custom, as explained to him by his elders. He is thus impressed, in a forcible manner, with the importance of the moral law, and at the same time he is impressed with a sense of the social value of food. The ceremonies thus afford a moral education adapted to the requirements of life as it is lived in the Andamans. It would need a very lengthy analysis to show all the effects of the ceremonies on the emotional life of those who undergo them, and for the purpose of this chapter such an analysis is unnecessary. It will suffice merely to mention a few of the more important. As stated above, the ceremonies teach the boy or girl self-control or self-restraint, and they do so in relation to one of the two

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fundamental human instincts,—hunger. The cutting of the boy's back in the North Andaman gives a still sharper lesson in self-control in the endurance of pain. Secondly the ceremonies teach the initiate, for the first time in life, to view life and its duties and obligations seriously. The various ceremonies are all very solemn affairs for the initiate. Again, the growing boy or girl is made to feel very strongly the importance of conforming to the customs of the community to which he belongs, thus having implanted in his mind what is certainly one of the most powerful of the sentiments that regulate conduct in the Andamans. In this connection there may also be mentioned the respect for elders which is a most important element in the regulation of social life in all savage communities, and which is strongly impressed on the initiate throughout the ceremonies. And yet again, the ceremonies awaken and develop in the adolescent that fear of unseen danger which, as we shall see later, has a very important place in the mental life of the Andamanese and an important function in their moral life. Finally, the whole series of abstentions and ceremonies serves to develop in the mind of every new member of the society that sense of the social value of foods with which our argument has been concerned, which may be briefly described as being a realisation that food is a possession of the society, that not only the power to obtain food, but also the power to use it without danger is something that the individual owes to the society, and that the bestowal upon him of this power involves the acceptance on his part of corresponding obligations.

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We may say, to look at the matter under another aspect, that the initiation ceremonies teach the youth or girl to realise what is implied in being a member of the society by putting him or her during the period of adolescence in an exceptional position, and, as it were, outside the society. The youth is no longer a child and may not act as a child; but he is not yet an adult and may not act as adults do. He feels himself cut off, as it were, from the ordinary life of the group, having as yet no share in it. As a child he was not yet aware of what it means to be a member of a society, but now, by means of the ceremonies, his attention is directed to the society and its life, by his being placed in a position of isolation outside it. He begins to look forward to the

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557 881 novice) is attached to the boy's birth-name; he is also addressed as *mar*[1] *gū·ma* (master novice) if senior to, and alone with the speaker: this term *gū·ma* is retained until the lad is married and is a father, after which *mai·a*[2] (Mr.)—or, if a chief, *mai·ola*—is adopted in its place, and by this title he would be known for the rest of his life. A young chief, however, attains the honorary designation of *mai·a* as soon as the novitiate terminates.[3]

881 ●262 2. The *â·kà-yâ·p-*, or fasting period (during which turtle, honey, pork, fish, and a few other favourite articles of food[4] are *choses défendues*), commences between the 11th and 13th year, and varies in length from one to five years; it is observed by both sexes, but lasts longer in the case of girls, with whom, indeed, it is not terminable till some time after matrimony. As an *â·kà-yâ·b-* makes up for these restrictions by eating a larger quantity of other food, he (or she) does not ordinarily suffer in physique during the probationary period. It does not rest with the youth or maiden to determine when he, or she, will resume eating the various articles above mentioned, but with the chief, who decides when each individual's powers of endurance and self-denial have been sufficiently tested. Exceptional cases are cited in which the probationer has expressed a desire to prolong the time of abstinence, it being a cause for boasting when the average period has been exceeded.

3. As at present understood, the *â·kà-yâ·p-* is regarded as a test of the endurance, or, more properly speaking, of the self-denial of young persons, and as affording evidence of their fitness and ability to support a family. It is divided into three periods: 1st, the *yâ·dī-* (turtle) *gū·mul-*; 2nd, the *â·ja-* (honey) *gū·mul-*; and 3rd, the *reg-jī·ri-* (kidney-fat of pig) *gū·mul-*.[5]

4. When the youth is permitted, and agrees, to break his turtle fast, a feast is arranged by his friends, consisting entirely of that delicacy. The chief, or headman present, first boils in a pot (*būj-*[6]) a large piece of turtle-fat, which, when sufficiently cool, he

may appear, there is no connection between *gūm-*, a ray-fish, and *gū·ma* (a youth who has undergone his probationary fast); moreover, as mentioned in a foregoing section (*vide* "Proper Names"), marriageable young women do not derive their "flower" names in the manner here described; in point of fact, no such custom as "wearing flowers" is practised by any class.

[1] *Vide* section on "Relationships," paragraph 6.

[2] As with the term *chāu·a* among women, the title is not bestowed for several years if there be no child.

[3] Both before and after the *â·kà-yâ·p* the individual is said to be *bó·tiga-*.

[4] These comprise the flesh of the iguana and paradoxurus, the larvæ of the Great Capricornis beetle (*òi·yum-*), and a smaller insect called *bū·tu-*.

[5] It will thus be seen that the *gū·mul-* answers very much to the Australian "bora," or ceremony of initiation into the privileges of manhood, spoken of by the Rev. W. Ridley in his Report on Australian Languages and Traditions (*vide* "Journ. Anthrop. Inst.," vol. ii, p. 269, 1873).

[6] *Vide* Appendix B, item 18.

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pours over the head of the lad, who remains seated and perfectly still in the midst of his friends while the oil streams over his body. The men present remove any ornaments that he may be wearing, and rub the grease into his person; the women and children meantime occupy themselves with crying, the idea being that, after abstaining from turtle for a long time, madness, illness, or even death, may result from partaking of it again.[1] After this the novice, who may not wash off the oil with which he has been anointed at least until late on the following day, is fed with the flesh of the turtle,[2] of which a certain quantity is reserved for his consumption on the ensuing two or three days, and the remainder is distributed among those assembled. He is then led to his hut and directed to sit cross-legged on a spot covered with leaves of the *Myristica longifolia*, with a support behind him against which he may lean. The turtle flesh, previously cooked and set apart for him, is deposited at his side, and one or more of his friends take it by turns to sit with him, it being their duty to enjoin silence, to supply his wants, and to prevent him from falling asleep by singing from time to time as the night wears away. The following morning his mother, sister, and other female relatives, come and weep[3] over him, and paint, first, his ears and the adjoining parts with *yâ·dī-kòi·ob-*, and afterwards his entire person with alternate stripes of this compound and *tâ·la·ōg-*. Some large leaves[4] made into two broom-like bundles are placed in his hands, and other leaves are placed in his waistbelt. Thus provided he rises and dances frantically,[5] swinging his arms at the same time, for an hour or more, while the women, who are seated with legs outstretched, keep time for him by slapping the hollow between their thighs with the palm of the right hand, which is held at the wrist by the other hand; the males look on, or, if they have gone through the ceremony themselves, accompany him in his performance.

5. After an hour or so, when, fatigued with his exertions, the youth stops dancing, the *yâ·dī-gū·mul-* is considered at an end, and the new *gū·ma* mingles with his friends, who, nevertheless,

[1] The same reason is given for the silence which the neophyte has to observe during this ceremony, as well as at the *á·ja-gū·mul-* and *reg-jī·ri-gū·mul-*.

[2] He is then said to *gū·mul māg·ke* (or *gū·mul lē·ke*), *i.e.*, to eat, or devour, the *gū·mul-*.

[3] The reason given for this demonstration of grief is that the youth has now entered upon an important epoch in his life, and is about to experience the trials and vicissitudes incidental thereto.

[4] The leaves of the *Myristica longifolia* (*bō·roma-*) are usually selected on these occasions, apparently because this tree is associated with turtle-hunting, paddles being made of the wood.

[5] The step is a peculiar one, and is only seen on these occasions: the performer keeps his heels together and stamps on the ground, at the same time he swings his arms violently, holding in his hands the two leaf brooms.

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881 continue to watch him carefully for two or three days, lest
●262 harm should result from his recent feast, and also because they think evil spirits are not unlikely to do him some injury by taking advantage of his supposed helpless condition to make him deaf, or cause him to forget his way, and thus meet the fate which, on the faith of their traditions, they believe to have overtaken two of their antediluvian ancestors.[1]

881 6. All that has been said of youths in respect to the *yâ·dī-gū·mul-* applies equally to young women, except that matrons remove the novice's ornaments, and all but one or two of her
[834] *bōd-*s (waistbelts[2]), and her *ō·bunga-* (leaf apron[3]), which are left for the sake of decency. As, while performing the concluding dance, some difficulty is experienced in regard to the *ō·bunga-*, girls are provided on these occasions with a more substantial apron of leaves, so that the feelings of the most prudish are not violated.

7. The origin of the term *gū·mul-lō·ke* is obscure, and inquiries have failed to elicit any satisfactory explanation regarding it; the literal translation is "rainy-monsoon devour-does," and though the *yâ·dī-gū·mul-* is always celebrated at that season of the year, the term is also applied to the honey feast, which can only take place during the dry months. The same equivalents are found in the other tribal dialects, so that the peculiarity is not confined to the *·bō·jŭg-ngī·ji-*. The only reasonable explanation offered is that the expression is in allusion to the sweaty (*gū·mar-*), or rain-like (*yūm-*), appearance of the novice when the melted fat or honey has been poured and smeared over his person.

881 8. Lengthened intercourse with the alien population in their
177 midst has naturally led to their occasionally betraying some
262 indifference in regard to customs, such as that above described; especially is this the case with those who have been brought up in the orphanage at Ross Island. A few years ago one of these youngsters, who had been named Martin, refused to accede to the wishes of his friends in the jungle home to which he had returned, and persisted in partaking of the articles of food proscribed to all of his age; as he happened shortly after to fall sick and die, they were fully persuaded that he had incurred his fate by failing to comply with the ancient rites and ceremonies as handed down by their fathers.

881 9. On the conclusion of the *yâ·dī-gū·mul-*, the youth is said to
262 be an *â·kà·gū·mul-*, and, as before stated, is addressed as *gū·ma;* but this is not the case with the girl, possibly because she, at

[1] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraph 23.
[2] *Vide* Appendix B, item 25.
[3] *Vide* Appendix B, item 79.

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this period of her life, receives a "flower" name,[1] and does not, therefore require any additional designation to denote that she has attained maturity. If more than one become *gū·ma* on the same day they call each other *gū·ma l'àrjō·pinga-*.[2] After the *yâ·dī-gū·mul-* turtles' eggs and the kidney-fat of the ray-fish and turtle may, at the bidding of the chief, be again eaten by the novice, and in the first ensuing dry season edible roots, and the heart of the *Caryota sobolifera* may be added to the bill of fare without further ceremony than the observance of strict silence on the first occasion of partaking of them.

10. Between the *yâ·dī-gū·mul-* and the *â·ja-gū·mul-* no fruit may be eaten by the novices, who have, moreover, to abstain till after the *reg-jī·ri-gū·mul-* from pig's flesh of any kind.

11. When the honey fast is to be broken, a quantity of honey-combs, according to the number assembled, are on the appointed day procured: the *â·kà-yâ·b-* being placed in the midst of the group, the chief or other elder goes to him with a large honey-comb wrapped in leaves; after helping the novice to a large mouthful, which he does by means of a bamboo or iron knife, he presents the remainder to him, and then leaves him to devour it in silence: this he does, not, however, by the ordinary method, for it is an essential part of the ceremony that he should not use his fingers to break off pieces, but eat it bear-fashion, by holding the comb up to his mouth and attacking it with his teeth and lips.[3] After satisfying his present requirements, he wraps what is left of the comb in leaves for later consumption.

12. The chief then takes another comb and anoints the youth by squeezing it over his head, rubbing the honey well into his body as it trickles down. The proceedings at this stage are interrupted by a bath, in order to remove all traces of the honey, which would otherwise be a source of considerable inconvenience by attracting ants. Beyond the observance of silence, and continued abstention from *reg-jī·ri-*, the youth is under no special restrictions, being able to eat, drink, and sleep as much as he pleases.

13. Early the following morning the lad decorates himself with leaves of a species of *Alpinia*, called *jī·ni-*,[4] and then, in the presence of his friends, goes into the sea (or, if he be an *ē·rem-tâ·ya-*, into a creek) up to his waist, where, locking his thumbs

[1] *Vide ante* "Proper Names," paragraph 3.

[2] *àrjō·pike*, to share, or to be a partner with another.

[3] This mode of eating is termed *pai·ke* (to use the lips), from *pai-*, the lip.

[4] This plant is selected because it is associated with honey-gathering; its bitter sap, being extremely obnoxious to bees, is smeared over their persons when taking a comb, and enables them to escape scot free with their prize (*vide post* "Food," paragraph 35).

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together, with open hands he splashes as much water as possible over himself and the bystanders, occasionally ducking his head under the surface as well. This is considered a safeguard or charm against *snakes*, and the on-lookers cry "*ô·to-ped·ike, kî·nig ·wâ·ra-jō·bo lô·tike* (Go and splash yourself, or *Wâ·ra-jō·bo*[1] will get inside you), for they imagine that unless they go through this splashing performance, this snake will by some means enter their stomachs and so cause death.

14. The only difference between the sexes with respect to the *â·ja-gū·mul-* is that with females it cannot take place until after the birth of the first child; they are also required to abstain from honey during each subsequent pregnancy; in their case, too, a chief or elder (preferably a relative) officiates, and not a woman.

15. A year is generally allowed to elapse between the *yâ·dī-gū·mul-* and the *reg-jī·ri-gū·mul-*. When this final step is determined on, the friends and relatives of the *â·kà-yâ·b-* start on a pig hunt, and, if unsuccessful, the *gū·mul-* has to be postponed for, in the case of a young man, it is necessary that the ceremony be performed with a boar, while for females a sow must be procured.

16. When all is ready, and the party assembled, the chief presses the carcass of the boar heavily on the shoulders, back, and limbs of the young man as he sits on the ground,[2] silent and motionless, this is in token of his hereafter becoming, or proving himself to be, courageous and strong. The animal is then cut up, and when the fat has been melted, as in the previous cases, it is poured over the novice, and rubbed into his person; he is then fed with *reg-jī·ri-*, and if he makes signs for water it is given him, but, until the following day, he may not utter a word, rise, or even sleep. Two or three friends generally remain with him to attend to his requirements, which he makes known to them by gestures.

17. In the morning fresh leaves of a tree called *reg lâ·kà chàl-*—the fruit of which is much eaten by the *Sus And.*—are brought, and a quantity of them are placed in the hands of the youth, and some more in his waistbelt; he then rises and, as at the turtle feast, dances until fairly exhausted. During the month following the *reg-jī·ri-gū·mul-*, the young persons are called *â·kà-gō·i-*, *i.e.*, "one commencing to eat."

18. It should be added that, whatever may have been the intention and practice in former years, it is not necessary at the present day for a youth to undergo these several ordeals before

[1] This is believed to be the *Ophiophagus elaps*.

[2] In the case of the woman, the carcass of the sow is not pressed in this manner on her limbs or body.

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two or three times in token of farewell;[1] then, replacing the leaves, they put the corpse into the grave in a sitting posture, and fill in and level the earth; next, having procured a quantity of the young leaves of the common jungle cane, they split them and make long fringe-like wreaths, called *â·ra-*,[2] which they fasten to the trees surrounding the hut, or encircling the entire camping ground, the object being to apprise any stranger or friend who might chance to visit the spot, that a death has recently occurred, and that they would therefore do well to keep away.

4. After suspending the *â·ra-* the fire is rekindled and the mother places a shell containing some of her own milk beside the grave, obviously in order that the child's spirit, which is believed to haunt its late home for a few days, may not lack nourishment. All in the encampment then pack up those things which are mostly needed and depart to some other camping ground,[3] generally not less than two or three miles distant, where they at once construct huts, usually of the description called *chàng-tô·rnga-*,[4] to serve as shelter during the mourning period, which as a rule lasts about three months; and during which the parents and relatives, naturally enough, refrain from taking any part in the festivities occurring among their neighbours. While mourning it is customary for the *ē·rem-tâ·ga-* to abstain from pork, and for the *àryô·to-* to deny themselves turtle as well as other luxuries, in token of the sincerity of their grief, but they never mutilate themselves by cutting off joints of their fingers, &c., as do the Hottentots and the Papuans of the Fiji Islands, nor have they, as has been erroneously asserted in Dr. Day's paper, daily, during periods of deep sorrow, to throw honey-comb, if obtainable, into the fire.[5]

5. At the expiration of the time mutually agreed upon, they all return to the deserted encampment and remove and destroy the *â·ra-*. The parents then exhume the remains, which are taken by the father to the sea-shore, or the nearest creek, there to be cleansed[6] from all putrefying matter: this done, he brings

[1] *Vide* ceremony at parting (*post*, "Meeting and Parting," paragraph 6).

[2] *Vide* Appendix B, item 73.

[3] Similarly do the Koi-Koin (Hottentots) "break up their kraals after every case of death, to avoid the proximity of the grave" (Peschel).

[4] *Vide* "Journ. Anthrop. Inst.," vol. xi, p. 283, and *ante*, "Habitations," paragraph 3.

[5] The practice here referred to is evidently that of burning beeswax (not honey-comb), the object of which will shortly be explained under "Superstitions," paragraph 18, and is not that here stated.

[6] This repulsive duty is always performed by one of the near *male* relatives of a deceased person. Dr. Day was led to believe that "the extraction of the skull and bones, it is considered, requires great skill and courage," but experience and the statements of all those aborigines who have been questioned on the subject, do not bear out this view.

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their encampment when the phenomenon occurs, they invariably secrete themselves, at the bottom of a boat, for example, if fishing, and remain silent for a short time before venturing to resume their interrupted employment. 776 821

5. Between dawn and sunrise they will do no work, save what is noiseless, lest the sun should be offended, and cause an eclipse, storm, or other misfortune to overtake them. If, therefore, they have occasion to start on a journey or hunting expedition at so early an hour, they proceed as quietly as possible, and refrain from the practice, observed at other periods of the day, of testing the strength of their bow-strings, as the snapping noise caused thereby is one of those to which the sun objects. 784 821

6. They invariably partake of a meal soon after rising, as it is believed that no luck can attend any one who starts to his day's work on an empty stomach. 777 264

7. They dare not use the wood of the tree called *al·aba-* (the bark of which supplies the fibre used in making harpoon lines and turtle nets) for cooking turtle, for, as will be found elsewhere,[1] this is an act so abhorrent to *mav·a ·ōgar-* that he visits the offenders with summary and condign punishment. 776

8. In tempestuous weather the leaves of the *Mimusops Indica* are constantly thrown on the fires, as the popping sounds thus produced are thought to have the effect of assuaging *Pū·luga-'s* fury and causing the weather to moderate. 821 776 [789]

9. When they see a dark cloud approaching at a time when rain would prove very inconvenient, as when hunting, travelling, &c., they advise *Pū·luga-* to divert its course by shouting "*wâ·ra-jō·lo kō·pke, kō·pke, kō·pke*" [*Wā·ra-jōbo*[2] will bite, bite, bite (you)]. If in spite of this a shower falls they imagine that *Pū·luga-* is undeterred by their warning.

10. This practice of menacing *Pū·luga-* is probably that to which Colonel Symes alluded when he wrote that "they confess the influence of a malignant Being, and, during the south-west monsoon, when tempests prevail with unusual violence, they deprecate his wrath by wild choruses."

11. Storms are regarded as indications of *Pū·luga-'s* anger; winds are his breath, and are caused to be blown by his will; when it thunders *Pū·luga-* is said to be growling at something which has annoyed him; and lightning, they say, is a burning log flung by him at the object of his wrath.

12. There is an idea current that if during the first half of the rainy season they eat the *Caryota sobolifera*, or pluck and eat the seeds of the *Entada pursætha*, or gather yams or other edible 821 776 262

[1] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraph 32.

[2] This snake, as already mentioned under "Medicine," appears to be the *Ophiophagus elaps*.

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821 776 262 roots, another deluge would be the consequence, for *Pū·luga-* is supposed to require these for his own consumption at that period of the year; the restriction, however, does not extend to the *fallen* seeds of the *Entada pursætha*, which may be collected and eaten at any time with impunity.

821 776 789 13. Another of the offences visited by *Pū·luga-* with storms is the burning of beeswax,[1] the smell of which is said to be peculiarly obnoxious to him. Owing to this belief it is a common practice secretly to burn wax when a person against whom they bear ill-will is engaged in fishing, hunting, or the like, the object being to spoil his sport and cause him as much discomfort as possible; hence arises the saying among them, when suddenly overtaken by a storm, that some one must be burning wax.

776 821 787 14. The rainbow is regarded as *ē·rem-chàu·gala's* dancing or sounding board, which is only visible at certain times; its appearance is said to betoken approaching sickness or death to one of their number, and is, therefore, inauspicious.[2]

823 776 15. There are no superstitions anent hills, valleys, rocks, &c., which, as stated in my last paper,[3] *Pū·luga-* is believed to have formed for some purpose of his own. The formation of creeks is attributed to a fortunate accident, the account of which being connected with their traditions must be reserved for that section.[4]

823 775 16. They imagine earthquakes to be caused by some mischievous male spirits of their deceased ancestors, who, in their impatience at the delay in the resurrection, combine to shake the palm-tree on which they believe the earth to rest, in the hope thereby of destroying the cane-bridge[5] which stretches between this world and heaven, and alone maintains the former in its present position. These selfish spirits are, however, said to be careful never to indulge in such practices during the dry months, as they imagine that, in consequence of the surface of the earth being then much cracked with heat, there would be considerable risk of its tumbling about their ears and crushing them instead of toppling over in one solid mass. They are said, therefore, never to play at earthquakes except during, or shortly after, the rainy season. But for the intervention of female spirits, who do their utmost to dissuade or prevent their male companions from continued enjoyment of this dangerous pastime, they are persuaded that there would be much cause for alarm on every occurrence of an earthquake.

775 17. They believe that every child which is conceived has had a

[1] *d'ja pid-* (*vide ante* "Death and Burial," paragraph 4, footnote).
[2] The Chippeway Indians call it the dancing spirit (*vide* "Travels in the Interior of North America," by Maximilian, Prince of Wied).
[3] *Vide ante* "Topography," paragraph 3.
[4] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraph 13.
[5] *Vide post* "Religious Beliefs, &c.," paragraph 25.

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304 sides, abdomen, and also on the upper part of the feet and back of the hands.

5. Cicatrices are often observed on the persons of both sexes, but these are due to scarification (*tū·pke*[1]), or some accidental circumstance whereby the cut has been obliterated, or has failed to heal in the same manner as the others forming the design.[2]

6. The *.â·kà-.châ·riàr-*, *.â·kà-.jār·o-*, *.â·kà-.ked·e-*, and *.ô·ko-.jū·wai-*[3] are most given to tattooing their persons, and may be specially distinguished by three rows of cuts down the back and chest: these latter marks are ordinarily much fainter than the former. Though women do the greater part of this work, the three lines down the back are almost exclusively made by some male friend with the *ē·la-*,[4] or pig arrow; except the three lines in front, the women of these tribes have no special marks, but are covered, like the females of South Andaman, with small raised cuts, which are inflicted by their own sex, with the ordinary glass or quartz flake, and not with the *ē·la-*.

7. The *.â·kà-.kôl-* differ from the four tribes just mentioned, only in that they omit the centre row of the three down the back.

8. The *.bō·jig-ngī·ji-*, *.bō·jig-yâb-*, and *.bal·awa-* are covered with plain tattooing consisting merely of perpendicular and horizontal incisions all over[5] the person, thus:

852 9. There is no distinction made in the mode of tattooing a
304 chief's child and the other children of the tribe; the marks have no special significance, being merely regarded as ornamental;

[1] *Vide ante* "Medicine," paragraphs 5, 6, 12, 16 and 17.

[2] They are not raised by producing "proud" flesh.

[3] Among these tribes the first and most severe operation consists in making the three rows down the back; during the time the wounds take to heal, the patient abstains from pork, in the belief that his recovery will thus be expedited.

[262]

[4] *Vide* Appendix B, item 5.

[5] The special poss. pron. denoting the various parts of the body are also used, in connection with tattooing, to express the particular limb or member to which reference is intended; thus:—

ôt-yī·tinga-	tattooing on chest or neck.	
ig-yī·tinga-	,,	arm, shoulder, or breast.
ar-yī·tinga-	,,	leg.
ab-yī·tinga-	,,	back, body, or thigh.
ông-yī·tinga-	,,	foot or hand.
á·kà-yī·tinga-	,,	side.

[6] *Vide* Plate II. fig. 1. Where, however, it will be seen that they do not quite attain to the regularity in marking here represented by the printing press.

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787 species at certain seasons is now accounted for by saying that they are visiting some of the adjacent isles.

775 3. Of mythological animals,[1] such as dragons and unicorns, they have no knowledge, nor do they venerate or regard as sacred any quadruped, bird,[2] or fish, even though the names of several are identical with those borne, according to tradition, by their antediluvian ancestors,[3] who are supposed to have been transformed into, or to have assumed the forms of, such creatures Beyond the instances already mentioned, no trace can be found of a belief in transmigration, and, now-a-days at all events, the souls of animals and men are not considered by these savages as interchangeable.

231 4. The names of four animals only appear to have originated in their cries, viz.: *dū·ku-* iguana, *mū·rud-* pigeon, *bī·bi-* dog, *rō·go-* pig; of these the dog only is trained, or in any way domesticated, and they do not, as has been supposed, keep poultry.[4]

262 **Food.**—1. Among the many erroneous statements regarding the life and habits of these islanders, none seem at the present day so devoid of foundation as that which declared that they are constantly reduced to want and even to starvation.[5]

2. It has been conjectured by some writers that these savages "glean a miserable subsistence," judging, it would seem, merely from the fact of their eating the larvæ of beetles,[6] and certain other articles, the predilection for which seems, to civilised palates, equally revolting;[7] but evidence is not wanting to disprove this assumption, for during the season, when such things are obtainable, they may frequently be seen enjoying a handful of cooked larvæ when a quantity of pork or turtle is lying beside them, and, if questioned, they declare that they regard the former as dainties (*á·kà-rá·rnga-*), and eat them as

[1] The legend regarding the *ū·chu-* can hardly be included in this category (*vide ante* "Mythology," paragraph 29).

[2] *Vide ante* "Mythology," paragraph 16 (footnote 3).

[3] *Vide ante* "Mythology," paragraph 29 (footnote 2).

[4] "They have no dogs nor any domestic animals, unless indeed their poultry may be regarded as such" (Lubbock, "Prehistoric Times," 4th edition, p. 450).

[5] "In tempestuous weather they are reduced to the utmost want, feeding on rats, lizards, and snakes, and perishing when these resources fail" (Grant).

"In the jungles, beyond a few berries and the wild hog, there was no food to be found" (de Roepstorff).

[6] The Looshais, however, appear to be even less fastidious, for they are said to "eat everything that flies, runs, crawls, or creeps, as well as the grub in its ante-natal tomb" ("On the Looshais or Kookees," *vide* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., March, 1873).

[7] "Nor are civilised Europeans justified in shuddering . . . . when they themselves do not shrink from the trail of snipe, nor from lobster and crayfish, although the latter, as water scavengers, act both as grave-digger and grave" (*vide* Peschel, p. 159).

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such, not because they find any difficulty in procuring other food.[1]

3. Both *àryó to-* and *ē·rem-tâ·ga-* find ample[2] provisions for their simple wants in their immediate surroundings, without exerting themselves to any great extent, and their eagerness in the chase is induced almost as much by actual love of sport as by the necessity of obtaining food: were this not the case they would hardly be found spending so much time in dancing and singing, in personal decorations, and in the preparation of their meals, while they reject with aversion anything that has become at all tainted. Further, it may be fairly estimated that one-third of the food daily consumed by them consists of edible roots, fruits, and honey, and the remaining portion of the flesh of one or more of the following, viz.: pig, paradoxurus,[3] iguana, turtle, fish, and molluscs, with rare additions of pigeons and jungle fowls;[4] Flying-foxes, bats, rats, sea- (not land-) snakes, the larvæ of the Great Capricornis beetle (*Cerambyx heros*) called *òi·yum-*,[5] as well as two other insects, called *bū·tu-* and *pī·rigi-*,[6] are, it is true, also eaten, but they are partaken of by way of variety, and the latter are regarded as luxuries (*â·kà-râ·rnga-*, tid-bits) to supplement (not substitute) other fare.[7]

4. The Andamanese are nominally content with two meals a day, viz.: breakfast (*â·kà-nâ·-*) and a heavy supper (*â·kan-go·lajnga-*) after sun-down; they will, however, often help themselves to small quantities of food from time to time in the course of the day when engaged on any work; and, when leaving on a

[1] "It cannot be wondered at that these savages love the unfettered life of their own wild jungles, where their simple wants are easily supplied—a lean-to serving them for quarters, and food such as they are accustomed to being found in great abundance. Nothing comes amiss to an Andamanese maw; roots, wild fruits, berries, crabs, clams, fish, wild pigs, and turtle are all ravenously devoured, and a glance at the well-nourished bodies of men, women, and children amply convinces one that they do not starve" (*vide* "Bombay Gazette," 2nd August, 1881: "The Andamans, our Indian Penal Settlement;" *vide* also paper by Professor Owen, F.R.S., "On the Psychical and Physical Characteristics of the Mincopies," Report of British Association, 1861. p. 246.)

[2] *Vide* "Tribal Communities," paragraph 2, and Appendix F (*Wō·i's* statement).

[3] It is presumed that Dr. Day refers to this animal when he states that "they eat cats," for they do not appear ever to have had any fancy for the flesh of *pū·chī*, the name they have adopted for the domestic cat, from the English "pussy."

[4] *Vide* "Tabu," paragraph 2 (footnote).

[5] Probably the "fat grub, about three or four inches long, much relished by the natives" (Australians), mentioned by Mr. H. W. Bates, in his "Illustrated Travels," is identical with the *òi·yum-*.

[6] The *bū·tu-* is found in rotten logs of jungle trees, especially the *Dipterocarpus lævis* (*à·rain-*), *Gluta longipetiolata* (*já-*), and *Chickrassia tabularis* (*ō·ro-*).

[7] Their fancy for grubs does not extend to the *Teredo navalis*.

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day's hunt, they usually provide themselves with some fire and a *gōb-*[1] of food, which they warm up and enjoy about midday:[2] no difference is made between the sexes, but all fare alike.

5. The average amount eaten by an Andamanese adult appears to exceed that of a native of India, and to average three or four pounds daily, while, like many other savages, after a successful hunt, or on some special occasion, when dancing is carried on through the entire night,[3] the consumption of food is surprising, and has, in some instances, been estimated at upwards of ten pounds of pork, or turtle, in the twenty-four hours, helped out by mouthfuls of some one or more of the delicacies above enumerated.[4]

6. As may be assumed from foregoing sections, caste distinctions are unknown; while, however, all members of a family take their meals together, a married man is only permitted to eat with other Benedicts and bachelors, but never with any women save those of his own household, unless indeed he be well advanced in years. Bachelors as well as spinsters are required to take their meals apart with those of their respective sexes.

7. Their mode of eating meat is to cram a large piece into the mouth, and then to cut off whatever is in excess[5] with a bamboo or cane (now-a-days generally a steel) knife. The same custom, carried to a more disgusting extreme, is found among the Esquimaux.[6] Speaking generally of the Andamanese it may be said that water is their only beverage, for though the aborigines in the vicinity of Port Blair have acquired a strong liking for rum, &c., they have not been permitted to gratify it; if very thirsty while on a fishing expedition, and all the fresh water supply be exhausted[7] the *àryô·to-* pour water over their

[1] *Vide* Appendix B, item 82.

[2] This applies to the meat of the turtle, pig, iguana, and paradoxurus; the remains of a feast of fish, shell-fish, and prawns are not warmed up a second time; a further distinction is made in the case of turtles' eggs, the three insects mentioned in paragraph 3, edible roots, and such fruits as are cooked (*vide post* paragraph 19), for these are left to cool before they are eaten.

[3] *Vide* "Games and Amusements," paragraphs 21 and 22.

[4] *Bêche de mer* and edible birds'-nests, so highly esteemed by some, and of which large supplies are obtainable along their coasts, are not regarded by the Andamanese as fit for food.

[5] For the following note, which refers to a similar practice among the Napo-Indians of South America, I am indebted to Mr. W. L. Distant:—"In eating meat (usually monkey, sea-cow, and peccari) we observed that they did not tear or bite it, but, putting one end of a long piece in the mouth, cut off what they could not get in, as Darwin noticed among the Fuegians" (Jas. Orton: "Andes and the Amazon," p. 168).

[6] *Vide* Lubbock's "Prehistoric Times," p. 486.

[7] They will now-a-days occasionally assuage their thirst, when away from home, by cutting off a piece of ground rattan (*bôl-*); this practice is only known to the people of South Andaman, and has been borrowed from the Burmese convicts.

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heads or jump overboard, and even at times try to alleviate their sufferings by swallowing salt water.[1]

8. In opening certain shell-fish[2] the adze is not employed, but one of the valves of the *Cyrena* is dexterously inserted between the lips, which are thus forced apart, after which the fish is killed with a knife or bladed arrow, and boiled; the *Tridacna crocea* and *Tridacna squamosa* are opened by inserting a piece of wood as a wedge between the valves,[3] afterwards the fish is despatched by stabbing it with an arrow point or blade; the various *Arca* species and the *Mytilus smaragdinus* are, however, not so treated, but are placed among a heap of burning logs for a few moments, the object being merely to part the valves, which would otherwise be a matter of some difficulty: when this is accomplished the shells are removed by means of the bamboo tongs (*kai-*[4]), and their half-cooked contents are transferred to a pot[5] (*būj-*) in which a little water has been placed; after being boiled a short time the gravy and flesh are eaten with the help of the shells. In former times oysters were eaten *cooked*,[6] but now their consumption appears to be confined to the inhabitants of North (and possibly also Little) Andaman: they give no reason for this change, but it may be due to their having occasionally suffered by feasting unconsciously on the poisonous, or at least indigestible, variety so commonly found in the mangrove swamps.

9. Dr. Day remarked that the mullet was their favourite fish, and "one day, having placed a quantity of different species before them, they helped themselves in the following order: . . . . *Chorinemus*, *Platycephalus*, horse-mackerel or *Caranx*, *Chrysophrys calamara*, and lastly *Tetrodon*, or frog-fish, which latter has generally the credit of being poisonous." My experience is that there are apparently no fresh-water, and but few salt-water, fish[7] which they will not eat.

10. It is a mistake to suppose that pigs were ever scarce in these islands, for though it was formerly more difficult than at the present day to shoot them, there is no lack of evidence to

[1] *Vide ante* "Medicine," paragraph 4.

[2] Viz., those of the *Pinna* and *Cyrena* species.

[3] This is only attempted when they succeed in surprising the fish before it has time to close its valves.

[4] *Vide* Appendix B, item 80.

[5] *Vide* Appendix B, item 18. [Note.—Water is boiled in a *būj-* by the ordinary process, and not by heated stones being dropped into it.]

[6] That Europeans should swallow these molluscs *raw* is a matter of considerable surprise to them.

[7] They prefer the fleshy part of the head to any other portion. To cut a fish is termed *chó·lke*, while to remove its head, tail, and entrails is styled *arwá·gke*.

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[136] 224 prove that they are, and always have been, fairly numerous.[1] The pig hunts are most frequent during the rains, not only because these animals are then more plentiful and in better condition, but because it is no longer the *râp-wâb-*, or season of abundance of jungle fruit and honey; from this, however, it must not be inferred that scarcity is then experienced, for those who choose to help themselves need never be in want.

• 262 137 252 11. During the cool season, *pâ·par-wâb-*,[2] the people themselves are alleged to become noticeably thinner: this they attribute not to a deficiency of food, but to the meagre condition of the pigs, which are then breeding, and to the fact that the edible roots (or yams), and other fruits then in season are not fattening. There are six varieties of esculent roots, viz.: the *gō·no-*, *châ·ti-*, *kâd-*,[3] *bō·to-*, *mal·ag-*, and *tāg·i-*, which are eaten alone (preferably cold), and not with meat; their chief difference consists in the extra care in preparation which some require, in consequence of their very acrid flavour.

12. The *gō·no-* is cooked in three ways: (*a*) it is placed on the fire in the condition in which it is found until it is soft, when it is freed from the burnt earth and eaten; (*b*) the root, after being washed, is cut up into small pieces and boiled in a pot; and (*c*) after being washed and cut up, the pieces are wrapped in large leaves and baked on burning logs.

13. The *châ·ti-* is cooked in the first of the above-mentioned methods, or by surrounding it with hot stones,[4] and covering the whole with leaves and weights, in order to confine the heat as much as possible.

14. The *kâd-* is first cooked as found, the skin is then peeled off, and a number of thin slices are cut and placed in water for a couple of days, so as to lessen the bitterness of its flavour; afterwards it is either baked in leaves or boiled, as already described in speaking of the *gō·no-*.

15. The other three varieties are never boiled, but are placed on the fire without leaves, and the outer skin is removed before they are eaten.

16. The seed of a species of sea-weed, known to them as *tō·no-tòng-*, on which turtles and dugongs feed, and which can only be obtained in small quantities, is carefully cooked and eaten as a relish.

[1] In his examination of a kitchen-midden near Port Blair harbour the late Dr. Stoliczka recorded that "the large number of bones of the Andaman pig is remarkable."

[2] This is the period between the rains and the dry season, and lasts about ten weeks, between the middle of November and the middle of February.

[3] The *gō·no-*, *châ·ti-*, and *kâd-*, are very plentiful during the cool season, and are much relished.

[4] *Vide post* "Stone Implements," paragraph 1.

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17. The fruit of three varieties of mangrove,[1] known to them as *jū mu-*,[2] *ngā·tya-*, and *bā·taga-*, are occasionally eaten, but only by way of change; they are prepared like the *kād-* (*vide* above).

18. The following table contains a fairly complete list of the different kinds of food eaten by the Andamanese during the varying seasons of the year; their ordinary diet, as will be gathered from the foregoing, consists of pigs,[3] paradoxurus, iguanas,[4] eggs of the hawkbill turtle, turtles, shell and other sea-fish and prawns, with occasional treats of dugong and porpoise,[5] and for married persons certain birds, already named: the fruit of the *Pandanus* and black honey must also be added, besides which, during the dry season, fresh-water fish, shell-fish, eggs of the green turtle, honey, the bee-bread, and that portion of the comb in which the larvæ are found, as well as the *Caryota sobolifera*, yams, and numerous fruits, about to be named, are eaten with great relish; while during the rains they vary their fare with preserved seeds of the *Artocarpus chaplasha*, *Semecarpus*,[6] and the fallen seeds of the *Entada pursætha*,[7] with three grubs, viz.: the *bū·tu-*, *pi·rigi-*, and the larvæ of the Great Capricornis beetle (*òi·yum-*), and certain fruits. Although on one occasion I saw a man (a member of the *ā·kà-ked·e-* tribe) actually eat an *òi·yum-* alive (!) their usual practice is to collect a quantity of the above-named insects and to wrap them up in leaves and place them on the burning embers, turning the bundle from time to time, so that its contents may be thoroughly cooked, whereupon, in the case of the *bū·tu-*, after breaking off the tails, they are consumed with evident gusto.[8]

19. The native names[9] of most of the fruits in season during the dry (*a*), wet and cool (*b*) months are:—

[1] Some terrible calamity, such as another Deluge, would result, so they say, from any one rashly presuming to taste the fruit of a certain species of mangrove, called *tō·kal-*.

[2] *Bruguiera gymnorhiza*.

[3] Not only are the sows eaten when with young, but even their unborn litter is not rejected.

[4] Iguanas and paradoxuri are in better condition during the rains, and are consequently more eaten at that season.

[5] There are special restrictions connected with eating both the dugong and porpoise for the first time (*vide post* "Tabu," paragraph 2).

[6] *Vide* paragraph 32.

[7] *Vide ante* "Religious Beliefs, &c.," paragraph 12.

[8] The *òi·yum-* is found in newly fallen logs, and they say that they do not treat it like the *bū·tu*—viz., in breaking off its tail—because it does not live in such rotten Gurjon trees.

[9] The botanical names of most of these, as well as of many others, will be found in Appendix L.

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(a)

*‡máng-, *‡ī·til- (either cooked or uncooked.)
dō·gota-
jâ-
ū·dala-
kón-
§chá·kan-
*bō·to-kō·ko-
kū·nra-
§pū·lia-
§pū·lain-
*pi·dga-
§gel·dim-
*ó·rta-tāt-
*†§chuij-kār·ega-
ūd-
§ñgē·bēr-
§ē·mej-
*eng·ara-
§lō·gaj-

(N.B.—The best fruits, and those which are most abundant, are in season during these months and at the commencement of the rains.)

(b)

†ó·ropa-
§pá-
*†kai-
†§kai·ta-
†chób-
†ö·dorma-
*á·bnga-
§ jū·mu-, ngá·tya-, bâ·taga-
*ká·pa-
pī·cha-
§pai·tla-
*kār·ed-[1]
§* jang·ma-[2]
*jī·ni-
†pū·ta-
*pór-
*ám-
*†mū·twin-tâ·tib-
*eng·ara-

During the *pá·par-wáb-* (cool season) and *yē·re-bō·do-* (dry months) the six varieties of edible roots mentioned above (*vide* paragraph 11) are also eaten.

(It will be understood that those fruits that are unmarked in the above list are eaten in the ordinary way).

20. Many fruits they merely suck for the sake of the flavour;[3] others are eaten with fine wood-ash,[4] taken from the hut fires *in lieu of sugar*, to diminish their extreme acidity,[5] while a few are cooked,[6] and the stones of several[7] are cracked for the sake of their kernels. The favourite fruits are *dō·gota-*, *ó·ropa-*, *kón-*, *chób-*, *jâ-*, *pâ-*, *kai·ta-*, *kār·ega-*, *châ·kan-*, *jū·mu-*, *ngâ·tya-*, *bâ·taga-*, *ñgē·bēr-*, *pū·lia-*, and *pū·lain-*.

21. The fruit of the *ñgē·bēr-*, *châ·kan-*, *pū·lia-*, *pū·lain-*, *pai·tla-*, *gel·dim-*, *lō·gaj-*, and the seeds of the three above-named varieties of mangrove (*i.e.*, *jū·mu-*, *ngâ·tya-*, and *bâ·taga-*), are freed from their husk or rind and boiled in water until quite soft; when cold they are cut in slices, and left to soak for two days or more in salt or fresh water, after which they are baked in leaves, or again boiled in a *būj-*.

22. The Andamanese are, now-a-days at least,[8] extremely particular over the cooking of their food, and will not eat certain

[1] This is a small yellow fruit, the seed of which, after being sucked, is broken, and the outer portion eaten while the kernel is thrown away.

[2] This is a small red fruit, about the size of a bean or filbert, containing one stone; it is wrapped in leaves and baked, because they say that if eaten uncooked it would cause them to forget their way in the jungle, as well as entire loss of memory on all points.

[3] These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a *

[4] Their immunity from scurvy may not improbably be due to the chemical combination of the acid, contained in many of the fruits, with the potash of the burnt wood.

[5] These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a †.

[6] These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a §.

[7] These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a ‡.

[8] They are very expert in spearing their fish, which they consume in a half-cooked state (Anderson); Symes also writes that "they throw the food on the fire, and devour it half broiled."

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cooked, but until the bristles have been singed and the skin dried sufficiently to allow of the dirt adhering to it being scraped off; this done, the remains of the charred leaves are removed, and the tendons at the joints being severed (*pū·nuke*), the carcass is cut up (*wā·ratke*) and distributed; while thus engaged, the operator not unfrequently helps himself to choice morsels which he may chance to find done to a turn, as his perquisite. The lining and flesh of the stomach are usually first disposed of;[1] the skin of the entrails, after being thoroughly cleansed, is also frequently consumed.

26. From the account given under "Initiatory Ceremonies"[2] it will be seen that the kidney-fat and omentum (*reg-jī·ri-*) are considered as luxuries from which the young of both sexes must abstain during a certain period. The lungs, liver, and eyes are also eaten, and they are quite of a mind with the Chinese in their estimation of "crackling"[3] (*ōt-ā·gam-*, also *ōt-gō·ma-*), which they consider one of the choicest parts, and enjoy so much that they are even willing to run the risk of offending the *chôl-*[4] by baking their pigs, rather than eat them boiled.

27. When, from some circumstance or other—such as possibly a death from sunstroke[5]—the dread of these demons is paramount, and they boil their pork, it has been observed that, as their pots are small, they remove each piece when partially cooked to make room for others, which afterwards, in the same way, are in turn replaced until thoroughly done; the reason given is that the flavour of the whole animal is thus equally distributed in every portion. On other occasions when the pig is not broiled whole on burning logs, or apportioned among the several families of the community for cooking in their own huts, the flesh is baked in leaves by means of heated stones (*lâ-*), which are placed between alternate layers of the meat; in every case the chief concern appears to be that the whole should be so wrapped in leaves that none of the juices be dried up, though every portion be thoroughly well done.[6]

[1] Experience and inquiries have alike failed to find an explanation of the following peculiar statement made by Dr. Day:—"The children and weakly persons eat sucklings, the bachelors and spinsters use those of medium size, whilst adults prefer the stronger boar."

[2] *Vide* paragraphs 15–17.

[3] The skin of the iguana is also eaten, but that of the *paradoxurus* is thrown away.

[4] *Vide ante* "Religious Beliefs, &c.," paragraph 15.

[5] *Vide ante* "Religious Beliefs, &c.," paragraph 16.

[6] In this respect they differ much from the Australians, who "never take the trouble to cook their food, but merely tear off the interior skin of the animal and, after holding the body over the fire for a few minutes, eagerly devour it in its uncleaned state, and frequently eat so voraciously as to be in a state of inactivity and torpor for several hours afterwards" ("A Ride across the Frontier of Victoria," by P. H. Eagle).

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28. For brains and marrow they have a great *penchant*, and, in order to extract the latter, will often crush the smaller bones with their teeth, while they break up the larger ones with a stone hammer.

29. The blood of the turtle only are they careful not to spill,[1] and this, though not preferred to the flesh, is considered a dainty, and is eaten separately, after it has been boiled in its own shell until quite thick.

30. They do not preserve the carapace of either description of turtle, but, having removed the flesh, place the shell over the fire, that all the remaining fat may be melted, when—with an appreciation worthy of a City alderman—they ladle it into their mouths with *Cyrena* shells, which thus serve as spoons. So great a delicacy do they consider this that the shell is finally broken up and divided, that no particle may be lost! This fat is largely used in the manufacture of *kòi·ob-*, and it may be judged how highly they prize the unguent since they are willing to deny themselves this dainty rather than allow their supply to run short.

31. Food is preserved by placing it on the small grating (*yât-leb-tâ·ga-*)[2] above the hut fire,[3] or in the following rather peculiar fashion:—having procured and cleaned a length of bamboo (*fem. sp.*), they heat it over a fire that the juices contained in it may be gradually absorbed. When this is satisfactorily accomplished, half-cooked pieces of pork, turtle, or any other food,[4] are packed tightly into it, and the vessel is again by degrees put over the fire, in order to heat it slowly, lest the rapid expansion of the meat should cause a crack; when steam ceases to issue forth, the bamboo is taken off the fire, and, after the opening has been closed by leaves, is set aside with its contents until a meal is required, when it is replaced on a fire, for, as I have remarked in another place, it is a peculiarity of these savages to eat their food in an almost boiling state.[5] As soon as the meat has been once more thoroughly baked, the bamboo is split open with an adze or other

[1] To kill a turtle they pierce the eye with a skewer or arrow (*i·dal jë·ralike*); when the flappers and belly-shell are removed (*tó·latke*), the animal is cut up (*wâ·ratke*) prior to distribution.

[2] *Vide* "Habitations," paragraph 5.

[3] Jean de Lery, in the account of his adventures among the Indians of Brazil (about 1557), describes the "wooden grating set up on four forked posts; . . . and as they did not salt their meat this process served them as a means of keeping their game and fish."—(E. B. Tylor's "Early History of Mankind," p. 262.)

[4] They have not acquired a liking for either beef or mutton, but are very fond of fowls, rice, dhall, sugar, and sweets of all kinds; it is strange, therefore, to find in Colonel Tickell's paper that "fish they were indifferent to, also to rice."

[5] *Vide ante* "Anatomy and Physiology," paragraph 8.

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blossomed: this is considered the height of the honey season, and is called *lad·u chàu-*.[1] It appears that on moonlight nights just at this time the bees consume a great portion of their honey, so that the "junglees" declare it to be useless to go for combs, either by day or night, until the moon has sensibly waned.

35. When about to make a raid on the hives, the Andamanese procure a certain plant, believed to be of the *Alpinia* species, called *jī·ni-*, and having stripped off the leaves, chew the stem and smear the essence thus extracted over their bodies; the mouth is also filled with the same juice, and thus armed *cap-à-pie* they proceed to disperse the bees, who, on attempting to attack them, are at once repelled by the obnoxious odour of the *jī·ni-*, emitted in a fine spray from the mouths, and also attaching to the persons of their despoilers, who sometimes make further use of the chewed stalks of the offensive plant in driving off the last remaining defenders of the hive.

36. Small combs[2] of both the white and black honey are commonly obtainable till about September—*i.e.*, so long as the *Dipterocarpus lævis*, the *Pterocarpus dalbergioides*, and a few other trees continue to blossom.[3]

37. While I had charge of the homes (and probably ever since), a large sum was annually realised by the aborigines towards their support from the sale of honey thus obtained to the free residents at Port Blair. So much indeed did they collect that we were able to store it in barrels and bottles, and generally found we had sufficient to meet all demands until the approach of the following season.

Tabu.—1. Besides the articles of food from which all abstain during the *ā·kà-yáp-*,[4] we have seen that there are certain fruits, edible roots, &c., which, in supposed obedience to *Pū·luga-*'s commands, are not gathered at prescribed seasons of the year,[5] and that mourners[6] (*ā·kà-ōg-*) also deny themselves by refusing to partake of their favourite viands until after the *t'ī-tō·latnga-*;[7] but beyond these restrictions, which are of general application,

[1] *Vide* Appendix H.

[2] The combs produced from the blossoms of the under-mentioned trees—*i.e.*: *.tā·tib-* (*Croton argyratus*), *.bi·bi-* (*Terminalia* (?) *citrina*), and *.bal·ya-* are much less plentiful, and they are smaller; this is also found to be the case with those made from the *.chā·langa-* (*Pterocarpus dalbergioides*), *.mō·nag-* (*Mesua ferrea*), *.ē·mej-* (*Terminalia bialata*), *.já-* (*Gluta longipetiolata*), and *.púb-* (*Lagerstræmia hypoleuca* (?) *regina*).

[3] As they are not, in their savage state, in the habit of storing honey, they are without any but the black honey during a great portion of the year.

[4] *Vide ante* "Initiatory Ceremonies," paragraphs 2 and 10.

[5] *Vide ante* "Superstitions," paragraph 12.

[6] If the mourners are *t'rem-tā·ga-* they abstain from pork, and if they are *àrō·to-* they abjure turtle (*vide ante* "Death and Burial," paragraph 4).

[7] *Vide ante* "Death and Burial," paragraph 7.

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262 every Andamanese man and woman is prohibited all through life from eating some one (or more) fish or animal: in most cases the forbidden dainty is one which in childhood was observed (or imagined) by the mother to occasion some functional derangement; when of an age to understand it the circumstance is explained, and cause and effect being clearly demonstrated, the individual in question thenceforth considers that particular meat his *yát-tūb-*,[1] and avoids it carefully. In cases where no evil consequences have resulted from partaking of any kind of food, the fortunate person is privileged to select his own *yát-tūb-*,[2] and is of course shrewd enough to decide upon some fish, such as shark or skate, which is little relished, and to abstain from which consequently entails no exercise of self-denial.

2. No one who has not attained the dignity of *gū'ma*,[3] by passing through the rites of initiation, is permitted to eat the flesh of either the dugong or porpoise; and further, it is necessary that the novice should be fed, on the first occasion of tasting either of these meats, by some friend or relative, who, having previously passed through the prescribed ordeal, is qualified thereby to admit others to the like privilege.

3. Except during the initiatory ceremonies, no prohibitions exist with regard to persons feeding themselves, or touching the food of others; after marriage the husband and wife only may eat together;[4] childless widows and widowers usually take their meals with the unmarried of their respective sexes.[5]

4. When an Andamanese woman finds that she is about to become a mother she abstains from pork, turtle, honey,[6] iguana, and paradoxurus; after a while her husband follows her example with respect to the two last-named meats, in the belief that the embryo would suffer were he to indulge in such food.[7]

[1] *tūb-* can only be applied to food, and is therefore not so generally applicable as *tabu* among the Polynesians. The equivalent of *yát-tūb-* in the *bō'jig-yáb-* dialect is *tām'a-tāp-*.

[2] It is believed that *Pū'luga-* would punish severely any person who might be guilty of eating his *yát-tūb-*, either by causing his skin to peel off (*wei'nyake*), or by turning his hair white and flaying him alive!

[3] *Vide ante* "Initiatory Ceremonies," paragraphs 1 and 9.

[4] The few birds that are ever shot for food (*vide post* "Hunting," &c., paragraph 27), are said to be, strictly speaking, *tabued* to all but *married* persons.

[5] *Vide ante* "Marriage," paragraphs 17 and 18.

[6] *Vide ante* "Initiatory Ceremonies," paragraph 14.

[7] Among the Abipones, if the infant dies during the first few days, the women accuse the father of heartless frivolity, as their excesses or abstinence are believed to affect the new-born infant. Again, Peschel states that in the Antilles, the father who is expecting offspring might not eat the flesh of the turtle or the manatee, for in the first case deafness and deficiency of brain, and in the second disfigurement by small round eyes, might be apprehended for the child.

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283 286 thigh, and the cuticle is removed by means of the *Cyrena* shell; the underlying white fibres are left for a week or ten days in the sun until thoroughly dry, when they separate readily, and are easily worked up into fine or coarse twine, as may be required by the manipulator.

283 824 3. The fibre of the *Anodendron paniculatum* (*yō·lba-*) is chiefly used for making bowstrings, reticules (*chá·panga-*), necklaces, and twine for arrow fastenings; its manufacture is accordingly not restricted to either sex. When the bark has been stripped off, in lengths of 8 to 15 inches, the operator presses the inner portion upon his (or her) thigh, and then rapidly but carefully passes a *Cyrena* shell along the outer surface until the fibres alone remain; these are then, as in the previous cases, dried in the sun, or before a fire; when a sufficient supply of material has been thus obtained, it is made into fine twine or, if not required for immediate use, wrapped in leaves in order that it may be kept fresh. Although apparently free [262] from any obnoxious properties, this plant, as well as the fibres obtained therefrom, until it is converted into twine or bowstrings, is believed by the Andamanese to render the flesh of a turtle uneatable if placed near it; consequently this meat, when inadvertently so contaminated, is thrown away; further, no one who has been collecting *yō·lba-*, or who has been engaged in preparing the fibre, can (for a period extending to three days) be allowed to cook a turtle, or even to accompany a party engaged [845] on a turtling expedition! Sharks and other dangerous fish are also credited with having so wholesome a horror or detestation of this plant (and also of *Cyrena* shells!) that the aborigines are in the habit of attaching some *yō·lba-*, or *Cyrena* shells (or both), to their cinctures as a safeguard when about to swim in parts believed to be infested by these creatures.

[531] 4. The yellow skin of the root of a certain orchid, called *rā-*, which is commonly found on trees near the shore, is often seen intertwined with their *yō·lba-* string, in personal ornaments, and occasionally in the decoration of weapons, but where strength is a requisite it is of course not used.

5. Bowstrings of *pī·lita-* and *yō·lba-* are made in the manner described in the manufacture of *al·ga-* rope, but ordinary string is made in the following manner:—a few of the prepared filaments are twisted into a yarn on the thigh with the palm of the hand; when two lengths have been obtained, they are together rolled into string of the desired strength, and beeswax is smeared over it to make assurance doubly sure.

6. Twine, made from the *yō·lba-*, is used in netting the fine chains (*rā·b-*[1]) and the reticules (*chá·panga-*[2]); for turtle-

[1] *Vide ante* "Death and Burial" paragraph 5, and Appendix B, item 42.
[2] *Vide* Appendix B, item 22.

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[501] (11) *Canoes.*—Bojigngiji and Yerewa, same pattern canoe; Ônge-Jarawa pattern different from above. Both out-rigged, Bojigngiji has in addition a large dug-out without outrigger.

[342] (12) *Huts.*—Bojigngijis and Yerewas have temporary huts. Ônge-Jarawas have large permanent communal dwellings.

[335] (13) *Dancing.*—Bojigngijis and Yerawas, sounding board and song and clapping in unison. Ônge-Jarawa, standing in a ring and alternately bending and straightening the knees: also on occasion kicking the buttocks with the flat of the foot.

[352] (14) *Beds.*—Jarawas sleep on the wood ashes of the fires. Ônges on raised bamboo platforms. Other tribes on leaves and in sand-holes.

[262 251] (15) *Food.*—The staple food of the Ônges is the mangrove fruit, boiled, and they preserve small fish dried after cooking. None of the other tribes do this.

The Long-shore and Jungle Andamanese.—The Andamanese are by themselves again further divided into the Aryoto or long-shore men, and the Eremtaga or jungle-dwellers; the habits and capacities of these two differ, owing to surroundings, irrespective of tribe. Some tribes as the Tabo, Juwai, Kol, and the South Andaman Jarawas, are entirely Eremtaga, while the Balawa, the Chariar, and the Jarawas of the North Sentinel are entirely Aryoto. The Aryoto holds himself to be better than the Eremtaga, but beyond this there seem to be no exclusive distinctions between them and an Aryoto will marry or adopt an Eremtaga.

With the minuteness in matters concerning their surroundings that is characteristic of all entirely uneducated people, the Andamanese recognise a third division of themselves by habits into Adajig or creek-dwellers, *i.e.*, those who live on the shores of the many inlets of the sea on the coasts of the Islands. The habits of the Adajig, however, are practically those of the Aryoto.

Distinctions by habits are quickly lost by the Andamanese. The Jarawas have now no canoes in the South Andaman and are quite incapable of constructing or using them, though all Ônges have them and so have the Jarawas on the North Sentinel. So also had the Jarawas that Colebrooke met a century ago. And this year (1902) it was ascertained that the young men brought up at the Duratang (Kyd Island) Home and occupied chiefly in market gardening could neither steer nor paddle a canoe, nor take up tracks in the jungles. In one generation, though there was no restriction in communication with their people, they had lost both sea and forest craft.

Former Isolation of the Tribes.—Before the arrival of the English the tribes, excepting actual neighbours, may be said to have had no general intercourse with each other, and excepting some individuals were entirely unable to converse together, though it can be conclusively shown that all the existing languages are directly descended from one parent tongue. Even Septs had but little mutual intercourse and considerable differences in details of dialect and, as has occurred in other island abodes of savages, there must have been a change of dialect or language along about every 20 miles of the coast. The tribes were in fact brought together and made definitely acquainted with each other's separate existence and peculiarities by the influence and exertions of Mr. Man between 1875 and 1880.

609 **Sympathies and Antipathies.**—The tribal feeling is expressed as follows: friendly within the tribe, courteous to other Andamanese if known, hostile to every stranger, Andamanese or other. The sympathy and antipathy exhibited are strictly natural, *i.e.*, savage, and are governed by descent. The feeling of friendliness lies in an ever-decreasing zone from the family outwards towards sept, tribe, group: hostility to all others. Even septs will fight each other and Aryoto and Eremtaga do not mix much. But there is no "caste" feeling, and tribes will, in circumstances favouring the actions (*e.g.*, living on the tribal borders), intermarry and adopt each other's children. Within the tribe there is so general a custom of adoption that children above six or seven rarely live with their own parents. It is an act of friendliness to give up or adopt a child and the custom has had the effect of making the various septs of a tribe hang together much better than would otherwise have been possible.

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145 to about 60 to 65, if he reaches "old age." Except as to marriage at an earlier age, about 18, these figures apply fairly to the women also, who, however, live somewhat longer than the men, retaining in old age both health and mental faculties.

163 **Reproduction.**—The marriages are infructuous, though barrenness is [853] uncommon, a couple rarely producing families of even moderate size and many none at all. The child-bearing age is from 16 to 35; weaning is much delayed.

291 **Endurance.**—Left to themselves the Andamanese go stark naked and with head uncovered, except that the women wear, as clothing and not ornament, one or more leaves in front and a bunch of leaves tied round the waist behind, or a tassel of leaves all round. Jarawas, however, of both sexes have been seen entirely naked. They dislike and fear cold, but not heat, though they avoid exposure to the sun; and being accustomed to gratify every sensation as it arises, they endure thirst, hunger, want of sleep, fatigue and bodily discomfort badly. Want of sleep, such as occurs at their dances for occasionally as much as [482] four days and nights, exhausts them greatly. A man's load is 40 lbs. and his distance 15 miles for a day or two only. After that he will rest, whatever the urgency.

252 **Food.**—The food consists of fish, pork, turtle, iguana, "wild cat" (*paradoxurus sp.*), shell-fish, turtle eggs, certain larvæ, and a great variety of fruit, seeds, roots, and honey, and is plentiful both by sea and land. They never starve, though they are habitually heavy eaters. The food is always cooked and commonly eaten very hot. As much as possible of an animal is eaten and the Andamanese, like most hunters, have found out the dietary value of tripe. The Andamanese are expert cooks and adept at preparing delicacies from parts of animals and fish.

142 **Skin.**—The skin, which is smooth, greasy and satiny, varies in colour from an intense sheeny black to a reddish brown on the unexposed parts and also on the collar bones, cheeks and other prominences of the body. Its general appearance has been likened to a "black-leaded stove." The scalp, the lips and nostrils are black, and there are black patches on the palate. The soles of the feet are brownish yellow. The Bojigngiji Group (South Andaman) are the darkest, and among the Onges parts of the face are a light reddish-brown. The Jarawas are distinctly fairer than the rest, the general colour being a deep reddish brown. Leucoderma occurs on the fingers and lips.

Hair.—The hair varies from a sooty black to dark and light brown, yellowish brown and red. The general appearance of it is sooty black or yellowish brown. Except on the head the hair is scanty, but not absent: on the head it grows in small rings, which give it the appearance of growing in tufts, though it is really closely and evenly distributed over the whole scalp. Limited baldness is un- [307] known, but temporary general baldness after disease occurs with a weak growth of the hair afterwards. The hair is not shaved, except on the head and eye- [145] brows, and each tribe has, with many fantastic individual variants, its own method of wearing it. It turns grey at about 40, but white hair is not common.

Shaving is "woman's work" and was performed by small flakes of quartz, but nowadays flakes from the kicks of glass bottles are substituted. It is effective and close, but a painful operation on an European's face, as I proved by personal experience many years ago.

Bodily Parts.—The mouth is large, the palate hard and highly arched, the lips well formed. The hands and feet are small and well made. The ears are small and well shaped, the eyes are generally dark to a very dark brown, bright, liquid and clear, but prominent with slightly elevated outer angles and become dulled with age. The teeth, in the young, except amongst the Onges, are white, good and on the whole free from disease. Those of the Onges are irregular and discoloured. As age advances the teeth generally lose their whiteness and become worn, but without much caries. The teeth are roughly used without any care whatever. Dentition is early.

164 **Diseases.**—The muscular strength of the Andamanese is great, but their vitality is nevertheless low, and the apparently robust quickly die after sickening

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2 Pottery vessels.
5 Net bags, empty.
1 Do. with 2 packets red ochre in palm leaves and fibres for binding arrows.
1 Packet honeycomb.
2 Baskets, cane.
2 Andaman adzes, made out of dahs.
1 Basula, new, of Forest Department marked with ∧ (broad arrow). Stolen on 22nd November 1901.
1 Bowstring.
2 Bows.
92 Bamboo-shaft and wooden-pointed fish-arrows.
92 Do. iron-pointed fish-arrows.
3 Barbed iron pig-arrows.
16 Bamboo arrow-shafts.

LIST OF JARAWA ARTICLES TAKEN BY MR. C. G. ROGERS, FROM THE HUNTING CAMP AT WIBTANG ON 24TH FEBRUARY 1902.

6 Honey pots, empty.
1 Do. with fibre.
1 Do. with fibre in honey and child's wooden feeding brush.
5 Andaman adzes, of sizes.
1 Axe, European head.
2 Knife blades made of dahs.
1 Adze head—European make.
1 Honey pot with king-crow chaplet, 2 bowstrings, 2 string cards, 2 pieces of resin, and 5 shells.
1 Palm leaf containing netting materials in net.
7 Empty nets.
1 Net containing 2 pots of pigment for pig arrows.
1 Net do. 2 pieces of iron and 4 shells for pigment.
1 Packet red ochre.
1 Net containing 2 pieces of iron and 2 small nets.
1 Piece of hollowed wood, containing red ochre prepared for arrow heads.
7 Iron-headed arrows.
2 Pots.
96 Bamboo wooden-headed fish-arrows.
8 Bows.
5 Arrow-shafts.
5 Pig-arrows, iron.
1 Iron arrow head.

REPORT BY MR. C. G. ROGERS, DATED THE 19TH MAY 1902, ON JARAWA CAPTIVES WHILE AT PORT BLAIR.

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An infant boy and a little girl, called Orlai, captured by the late Mr. Vaux near Bajalunta (Talaplongta of the maps) were brought to Port Blair by Mr. Bonig, Assistant Harbour Master, on the 21st February 1902. The little girl, Orlai, had a very pronounced squint in her left eye. She was kept at Government House until the 26th February, when she was allowed to join the other Jarawa captives, who were taken at Wibtang on the night of the 24th February and reached Port Blair on the 26th in the *Belle* in the charge of Messrs. Rogers and Bonig. The captives taken at Wibtang comprised two women and six children including two babies. They were kept at first in the hospital at Haddo and after that in the Haddo Andamanese Home, as they got out of the hospital one morning early and were found at the *ghat* evidently trying to escape. After this they were placed definitely in the charge of Luke and the watchman at the Home and did not again try to escape.

The Jarawas would not touch rice, or any of the rations supplied to the Andamanese, nor would they smoke. They were fed on yams, fish, pig's flesh, when it could be obtained for them, and crabs. They cooked their food very thoroughly before eating it. They were very fond of cocoanuts, when they were given them, and had evidently eaten them before. They drank water, but did not care for either milk or tea. They did not like sugar or anything sweet. They would not touch honey from the Andamanese store, which had fermented slightly, but liked fresh honey in the honey-comb. The friendly Andamanese could not understand a word of the Jarawa language nor could the Jarawas understand the Andamanese; they made themselves understood to a certain extent by signs. While the captives were at Port Blair we only learnt what we believe to be their names and a few words for the food they eat.

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The Jarawas were quite friendly and evidently felt that they would be well treated. Mr. Bonig and myself went to see them almost every evening while they were in Port Blair and took them out for walks, and they looked forward to our visits and the women usually took our arms, while the children clung to us. While they were in Port Blair we took them over Ross, Phœnix Bay Workshops and Chatham Sawmills. They evinced no astonishment at what they saw, but some fright. They do not seem capable of evincing pronounced emotions of any kind, either of grief or astonishment or pleasure. On

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3. Food

In the absence of men, women also are good at fishing inside the coral reefs. They do this with two small nets used together. Their catch generally consists of brilliantly coloured fish with yellow, red, green, blue, black and white stripes forming varied and attractive designs. The Onge eat all fish without discrimination. My Indian collaborators, on the other hand, considered the coloured fish dangerous to their health and refused to cook them ; the Sacred Vedas, in fact, advise the avoidance of brigthly hued fish and of fish without scales. I wanted to try both kinds, and found them perfectly palatable, tasty and harmless.

No tool, used for any purpose by the Onge, ever gets a cleaning. Cleanliness, I repeat, is unknown in Little Andaman. See how food is prepared and disposed of ! Care is taken only not to throw big pieces of meat intended for cooking directly on the bare ground ; but once it is cooked, food is treated with the utmost disregard for dirt, dust, cobwebs and other such things. It is usually left lying around on large leaves spread out for the purpose. The remains of the Onge's orgiastic meals are kept out of reach of the dogs on the ceiling of the huts, to be covered with flies when no fire is lit directly below. Sand and grit may get wedged annoyingly in the teeth, but not such impalpable things as dust or cobwebs. The use of unclean food is not repugnant to the Onge. The same can be said for water polluted by dogs drinking and bathing in it, or by the presence of putrefying carcases. In the west of Little Andaman I saw some Onge avidly drinking from pools of a blackish water with a revolting sulphurous smell. After thoroughly filtering and boiling it, I too used such water, for it was the only water available in the neighborhood. This caused no ill effects. My Indian men considered it perfectly healthy and invigorating, and drank it safely in its natural condition.

The Onge eat with their unwashed fingers, without the help of tools. On rare occasions they use platters made of the flattened-out stems – or bracts – of *areca* palms. They sometimes carry these platters when travelling, but of course never wash them although they become coated in rancid, greasy filth. They soon assume a dark colour and a truly revolting appearance – aside from the awful smell. A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN's statement – that the Andamanese paint their bodies to neutralize the unpleasant smell of food that clings to them after their orgiastic feedings – shows only indirect knowledge of the life and manners of those people. Even the horrible flatulence that follows their pork orgies is not considered an inconvenience ; yet it is much more revolting than all the other body odours.

Although the Onge observe few hygienic precautions they do follow a number of medical practices, not all devoid of beneficial effects. Here are a few more remarks on their eating and drinking habits. For about six months of the year, between November and April, water is scarce in Little Andaman. Every kind of fresh water is then considered good by the Onge, regardless of whether it is a murky infusion of rotting leaves or afloat with the putrefied

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312 caracases of small animals. During the droughts, marine hermit crabs, of
271 which a profusion is found in Little Andaman even far from the sea-shore,
[136] often choose to die in fresh-water pools. They are not removed from the pools.
[415] A nautilus shell is sometimes used as a drinking vessel ; failing this, the Onge
[516] lap up the water like animals, on all fours, directly from the pool. Since they are
231 very fond of dogs, man and dog drink together from the same tiny pool, often holding no more than a few pints of water. Dogs reached Great Andaman as early as 1857 ; they came to Little Andaman much later. Before that time there were no dogs in the Andamanese Archipelago. They soon became the natives' cherished and much appreciated assistants in the hunting of wild pigs. Many unhygienic habits followed the appearance of dogs in the Andamans.

271 The Onge have no idea of boiling water for the purpose of disinfection ;
[49] nevertheless their health does not appear to suffer at all as a result of the pol-
123 luted water they drink. When, in 1952, I dug a well near the left bank of Dugong Creek on the north-east coast of Little Andaman, I was compelled to fence it in so as to prevent dogs from drinking it and bathing in it.

264 Dogs lick everything that smells of food, including the cooking pots,
[291] and the pots are not washed before use after the dogs have licked them.
[136] Swarms of flies of different species and small coleoptera of a brilliant blue colour, one of them 6 mms long, follow the dogs after they have "cleaned" the pots by licking them. They line the inside of the pots with a crawling, living coat, moving restlessly around in search of food. One species of fly, which is of a brilliant, metallic green colour, has a peculiarly disagreeable smell. All the flies lay eggs while feeding, but the eggs are soon devoured by the hovering bluish coleoptera. Thus in a few hours all traces of organic matter disappear from the pots. Subsequent exposure to fire undoubtedly destroys the germs that would otherwise be certainly dangerous to human beings.

415 The Onge no longer use indigenous pottery for cooking. Its disappearance
177 is recent, as the sherds that litter Little Andaman prove to the investigator.
[323] Excavation in modern kitchen-middens leads to the same conclusion. During the last war, quantities of empty petrol drums were washed up on the Andaman shores. They were found in such numbers that the Onge have not yet used them all up : after 1952 I found several of these containers abandoned, untouched, in the jungle. The primitive inhabitants sawed each container in two cylindrical halves, thus transforming them into cooking pots. The result was that within a few years the fragile ancestral pottery of the Onge disappeared altogether. Furthermore, aluminium pots were distributed among the natives after 1952. Probably the indigenous pottery will never again reappear.

[252] Each half of a petrol drum is large enough to contain a pig, or a turtle weighing
262 150 lbs, cut into pieces. Only the flesh of these animals is consumed by the
[231] Onge ; the nourishing broth is poured out onto the ground or left in the pot to be lapped up by the dogs. The Onge believe that broth is unhealthy and avoid drinking it.

251 No matter how prodigious the catch of sardines or other fish, unobtain-
[185] able at other times of the year, no attempt is made at storing part of it in view of future shortage. The Onge are unacquainted with methods for preserv-

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ing edible matter ; furthermore, they don't care to take the trouble as food is generally plentiful. We must also realize that they find salt repulsive. Even honey – so easily kept for many months – is disposed of, if possible, on the very same day it is collected. Incredible quantities of this or other food may be consumed for days and nights on end until everything disappears. Very few of the islanders care to vary their meat diet with an occasional diet of vegetables in order to disintoxicate the system ; yet nourishing yams and other roots grow wild and plentiful. They are so rich in carbohydrates that I preferred them to potatoes and rice. I may add that the Onge, on my request, brought me yams and roots that they were glad to barter with rice, tea and sugar – soon declared by their wise men to possess medicinal properties.

The Onge's stomach, intestines and general physiological equilibrium suffer from lack of salt and such bad nutritional habits as those described. They damage the human body, together with unrestrained sexual activity.

One highly unhygienic custom of the Onge is the use, all over Little Andaman, of peculiar sucking-sticks. These pass from mouth to mouth during the frequent meat or honey orgies indulged in by the natives.

When boiling pork or turtle, a quantity of liquid fat floats on the surface of the broth. Though the Onge despise the broth, they don't like to waste the fat. So they devised an efficient solution : they suck the fat up by means of a wad of absorbent matter obtained by chewing the end of a fibrous stick selected among many species of trees in the forest. The end of the stick is chewed along a section of 5 cms, the remaining part – about 25 cms long and 2 cms thick – is used as a handle to prevent the fingers from burning.

In every Onge camp sucking-sticks are permanently in evidence owing to the inmates' frequent ingestion of liquid fat or honey. A second version of the sucking-stick consists in a narrow, cotton-like strip, up to 80 cms long, with only a small part of the original wood remaining. This serves as a handle for dipping the stick into a wooden barrel full of honey. In both instances the same tool passes for hours from mouth to mouth : from older people to greedy children, anxious to suck the coveted delicacy off the stick that has been dipped into the pot. The rapid spreading of epidemics, which often occur in the Andamans, is certainly encouraged by the use of these sucking-sticks. I found no reference to this practice in books on the Andaman Islands.

Everything they eat, particularly meat, the Onge consider as either remedial or harmful. They are therefore chary of accepting proffered food if it is unknown to them. When I brought 30 Onge to Port Blair to introduce them to Dr. RAJENDRA PRASAD, President of the Indian Republic, they were troublesome about food. In Port Blair it was not as easy as in Little Andaman to procure whole pigs ; sometimes only pieces were available. The Andamanese Forest Department was quickly informed of the difficulty and kindly supplied the desired animals. In moments of shortage I tried to give the Onge cooked lamb, goat, chicken and pigeons ; they resolutely refused them as unhealthy. Birds are never eaten by the Onge, who consider them shelters for human souls

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262 and therefore dangerous to offend by cooking them. Luckily they accepted
123 fish of almost every description, and vegetables. To convince them of our
[975] good intentions concerning their food, at Port Blair an Onge observer was
[825] stationed permanently near the kitchen to watch the preparation of meals.
Nevertheless, within a few days all 30 Onge fell ill as a consequence of the
513 different food and climate. In their island they sleep, completely naked and
123 uncovered, lying directly on beds made of rough branches. Their only precaution, as I mentioned before, is to keep a fire permanently burning close to the bed. This was not feasible in the rooms with wooden floors that were provided for them in Port Blair, and blankets did not avail. So the 30 Onge developed a fever and we were obliged to take them urgently back to Little Andaman, where they promptly recovered. The incident gave me a further opportunity to observe the curative methods of the Onge.

262 With regard to their care to avoid illness from food, I must point out the
114 fact that misleading information has been published on the subject even in reputed papers on the Andamans. I will discuss them in my Onge book, but I wish here to briefly stress a few points : the Onge, and the present residual coastal or forest Andamanese, refuse to eat – besides birds and fish such as shark, ray, eel or muraenae – some other animals such as paradoxurus, bats, rats, varanus and snakes. The contrary is affirmed in those papers. To quote the well-known book by A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN ("The Andaman Islanders", pp. 37, 91 and 389), all Andaman Islanders, including the Onge, consider the above-mentioned species edible. Varanus is supposed to be acceptable for its
[832] lustful habits that make of it an aphrodisiac. My direct and protracted experience both in Little and in Great Andaman compels me to state that such information is false. It is true, however, that the Andaman Islanders believe
261 they acquire some of the properties of their devoured victims. This occurs
252 only if the animals are cut up alive. Therefore turtles, pigs and dugongs are
[231] cruelly sectioned while still alive, and the Onge also believe that their health
266 and energy profit by it. Cannibalism may be founded on such beliefs, but it is
262 completely unknown to Andaman Islanders of all times and places. Young sucking-pigs are avoided, as food, by men, and even withheld from the dogs ; but the Onge are partial to other things which, in our opinion, are far worse : crickets, and the fat larvae of coleoptera that collect in tree trunks.

Without giving here a full list of the foods that are considered harmful or curative, I shall add just a few remarks on the subject. The healthiest, as well as the tastiest part of the pig is supposed to be the kidney and its surround-
[888] ing fat. It is offered to old or distinguished people, as a sign of favour. As I
123 helped the Onge, as much as possible, with gifts of tools and medicines, they
553 found it complimentary to name me after their favorite titbit, intending thereby to honour me as a friend and healer. By such a name I came to be known in Little Andaman, and this made my work easier. In the Onge language the word for kidney fat is *cue-changhēghē* ; I was delighted with it, for it proclaimed the high esteem I was held in by my Onge friends.

262 Foods considered healthy by the Onge include honey, yams, several
751 succulent roots and the fat of turtle and dugong. Pteropus, a giant bat very
[825]

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common in the Andamans, said by RADCLIFFE-BROWN (p. 273) to be eaten by the Andaman Islanders as a protection against rheumatism, is never killed. For some superstitious reason the Onge are simply horrified at the thought of touching such an enormous flying bat. Among the fruits, those of a plant whose wood has such a revolting smell that it is known, in English, as "stool-tree", are believed to have exceptional protective properties for the human body. The fruits themselves smell even worse than the wood, but this, to the Onge, makes them appetizing rather than disgusting. Concerning honey, and the many sugary fruits of the jungle that are available all the year round, the Onge luckily ignore the simple method of distilling alcohol. No intoxicating drink reaches Little Andaman from the outer world, whereas in Great Andaman alcohol, together with imported syphilis, was one of the main causes of depopulation. No syphilis appears as yet to have reached Little Andaman. This is also confirmed by the research carried out by Dr. HERMANN LEHMANN of London's St. Bartholomew's Hospital, during February 1953 in my Onge camp in Labanare (north-east coast of Little Andaman).

II. Effects on the People's Lives

The islanders die young, specially the men. The majority of them succumb before reaching the age of 20; most of the survivors die between 20 and 40; the rest – with a very few exceptions – before 50. Women, after marriage, follow a similar pattern: the death rate among women, however, is slightly different owing to a less corrosive sexual life. Some women may live to the age of sixty, but both sexes age soon, appearing older than their years when still in their twenties. The short Onge span of life recalls conditions which apparently prevailed among prehistoric and protohistoric men. Palaeolithic man died at an earlier age than modern man. The Onge today, in many respects, behaves as palaeolithic man behaved countless centuries ago. – Infant mortality is high; the first five days of life are the most critical for the Onge, owing, in part, to the hard life led by mothers even during pregnancy, which often causes functional damage to the placenta. Delivery is generally easy and traumatic injury rarely occurs; but premature births are common, and so are malformations and other anomalies. Imperfect infants are quickly eliminated by their parents. As a result, only a small number of children are allowed to grow up, but these appear normal. There are no blind and no deaf-and-dumb people in Little Andaman. I saw only two instances of incipient lameness: in an unmarried boy of about twenty and in a young married woman. Only robust infants can survive.

The Onge, so careful about their food, are completely indifferent to something else that is considered very harmful in continental and insular regions close to the Andamans. There, menstruating women are often segregated and considered harmful to the entire community. Not so in Little Andaman, where the remedies applied in the circumstance are extremely primitive (cf. supra) and could probably be traced to palaeolithic man. I saw nothing

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no specialized physicians, the Onge do not understand that payment can be exacted for medical care. This stems from the fact that wages are not considered by those happy people as payment for any kind of work whatsoever, but only as a gift. I realized this when I tried to pay my guides after our extenuating marches through the jungle : in order to avoid offending the natives that we had casually met in the course of our trip, I had to give equal reward to everybody.

The Onge consider some men or women better endowed than others with anti-malefic influence ; but these too neither demand nor receive wages for their services. Evil spirits or evil persons are believed to be principally responsible for illness. A series of superstitions and remarkable habits derive from this belief. The above-mentioned precautions concerning the *naquinēghē* are among them. For identical reasons they carefully hide hair cuttings, but not nail parings, for the simple reason that nails are never cut but worn down by digging for edible roots, fishing, and other rough work. Superstition, as we know, is also the reason for painting the body to prevent fever and other ills.

In the depths of their jungle the Onge appear to practice some kind of witchcraft. On several occasions I noticed the mysterious behaviour of some natives travelling with me. Occasionally a man left our marching column to examine the inside of a huge hollow tree and signal to his friends. They did not prevent me from looking into the hollow, where I saw only a simple structure of short sticks resembling a trap without being one. The Onge do not use traps ; moreover, those structures were far too flimsy to catch anything. Often, two or three men assembled in consultation, rearranged the sticks that had probably been dislodged by the passage of lizards, crabs or other small animals, and walked away silently. I could get no explanation on the matter. Certainly the Onge are sagacious observers of animal and vegetable life and have deep knowledge of their hidden properties. Some trees are probably used for magical purposes, but, I insist, it is impossible as yet to affirm it. The structures in question consisted of four vertical sticks, about 30 cms long, joined at the top by four more sticks of approximately the same length, placed horizontally. The result was a box-like frame, loose and unsecured. The slightest disturbance, such as a light breeze, could destroy the flimsy construction. As far as I could guess they invested those structures with curative properties, but in what manner remains a mystery. I noticed analogous practices among Central African Pygmies and other primitives.

It is very clear that the Onge dread illness and magic spells, for they consider themselves at a loss in fighting such evils. Unhygienic habits are of no importance to them.

2

Resting is considered favorable to good health. The Onge indulge voluptuously in rest, interrupting it, however, with too frequent sexual excursions. They mainly rest from doing nothing, because 90 % of their time is spent in what, for them, is the most agreeable manner of enjoying life.

In mid-March, when the honey harvest reaches its peak, the Onge guzzle

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262 immense quantities of it together with pork. I was with them three times when
517 this recurred, so I could observe their behaviour exhaustively. With their
302 bellies full, the natives rest. Their only activity is body painting, performed by
178 the women on the skin of their peacefully sleeping husbands. Designs change from time to time as I said before, according to the women's inventiveness. Each family challenges the others in renewing their patterns. The best are later reproduced until the next change. From year to year I noticed no real evolution in this rudimentary art, but a cyclical fashion, with temporary preference, in males and females alike, for some geometrical designs, unconnected with whatever kind of food they had been eating. This contradicts the published af-
114 firmations of several authors, who allege that the Andamanese paint special
302 patterns in special colours for different kinds of food. There is nothing more
[262] false, at least with reference to the Onge. Merry feasting, whether on pork
[751] turtle, dugong, fish or honey, leads to a period of rest and body decoration –
[515] always in similar patterns and colours – with the unique purpose of preventing illness. We might say that painting the body is equal to cleaning it, but this is quite unintentional. A curious exception to the Onge's filthy habits is the
264 practice of sweeping the floor after solemn banquets in communal huts. The
356 surface of the floor consists of unpacked earth hardened by casual tramping.
342 When it is dry, sweeping raises a heavy dust that fills the hut to the ceiling.
251 It deposits there on the wooden beams where the Onge like to store cooked
262 victuals. So they eat their food, as I said before, coated with dust, no matter
412 how thick. A brush without a handle is used to sweep the floor ; it is 80 cms long and no thicker than a man's wrist. It is one of the nicest tools made by the Onge, and consists of strong, hard, elastic palm fibres bound together with strips of rattan. The dirt is simply thrown out all around the hut, by pushing
356 it under the roof mats that never reach the ground.

These notes offer a first glimpse into a peculiar aspect of Onge life. It is
114 to be deplored that these vanishing people have not yet been exhaustively studied, notwithstanding their anthropological interest and high biological significance.

10:Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

rather than order is given by the leader. Cipriani observes.[1] "For instance, it is very amusing for them to think that a man gives orders to others. This means that they have no real chiefs. A so-called Onge chief, or raja, is only the head of a group of families living in the same communal hut, and giving not orders but only advice. It is the most experienced man who is considered chief in the hut, but his authority if at all never goes beyond that hut. In other words no real chief exists in the Little Andaman. Notwithstanding this, there is a perfect order in the island, because nobody interferes with the work or encroches upon what can be considered the rights of others."

As is common to most of the aborigines, the Onges are generally not very receptive when the questions about their numbers and other groups are enquired. The headman says that there are many many fifty Onges. However the number of the Onges are approximately 600.

As regards the mode of living of the Onges, the hunting and collecting are the basis of their economy. The domestication of the plants i.e. art of agriculture is not known to them and it is only 30 years back, the dogs arrived in the island and have been domesticated by the Onges for chasing the pigs, their main prey. In the absence of agriculture, the natural products of the sea and the forest provide them with all their items of diet. Animal and vegetable products and honey are the main items of their diet and there has been, so far, no introduction of salt in their diet. The most important victims of their hunting are pigs and turtles, the former is chased by dogs and are killed with great cruelty. The cooking of the fish, meat, roots, tubers, jackfruits etc are done by putting them under fire. Preservation of foodstuffs is not widely practised except the jackfruit seeds which are tied up in a small net inside water on the bank of some stream and taken out during rainy season, when the other vegetable foodstuffs are not available. On the whole, the Onges have a very balanced diet with a fair richness of all the nutrients. In this connection the observations of Dr. Cipriani during his survey in the Little Andaman throws considerable light in their conditions of life. He has estimated the Onges as one of the happiest people of the world, who in spite of their primitive economy, are not the miserable victims of poor health, ill nutrition and oddities of life.

Some amount of artistry and craftsmanship have developed among these people. A canoe can be constructed by a man, all by himself from

1 Cipriani, L—Survey of Little Andaman during 1954; Bul. Dept. Anth.,

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

taste. The liquid content of these stems is so great that it makes them extremely heavy to carry. These lianas are very common all over the islands and anyone who knows them need never die of thirst. To get at the liquid one only has to break the stem and put it to one's mouth; if one puts a receptacle under the break, a litre or so of liquid can be obtained in a matter of minutes. When the first strangers came to the archipelago, the Andamanese watched them tear down parts of the forest, including these lianas, and tried in vain to protest at the vandalism. No one understood their protests, but they were right.

The forest abounds in trees whose fruits in season form an important source of food for the islanders. One is the so-called jackfruit, *Artocarpus communis*, which here grows wild, though various species are cultivated all over Asia. The fruits, which appear on the thickest branches as well as on the trunk, are smaller in the wild variety, rarely weighing more than thirty grams, but the yield is enormous and the islanders enjoy them for months, especially from March to May. The Onges call them *bulundanghe*, and roast them in hot ashes till the hard pulp and seeds are eatable; the latter, the size of a hazelnut but tougher, are the best part.

Another useful plant is the *Pandanus*, or screw-pine. On Little Andaman extensive areas are covered with nothing else, making progress very difficult owing to the twisting roots and the spines on the long, tough leaves. It seems to prefer the coastal areas, particularly the marshes, where it often grows into an impenetrable jungle. There are at least two species, one of which is gregarious. The other, which grows as isolated specimens, is longer leaved, with bigger fruits and stems like candelabra, standing up on an arch of roots, as though on stilts. With the leaves of this variety, fluted and easy to arrange like roof tiles, the Onges can quickly improvise a waterproof covering. The young leaves provide them with ornaments which they wear for their dances, while the pulp of the fruit, which looks rather like a pineapple, perfumed and delicately flavoured, is nutritious though somewhat stringy.

Along the coasts where there are no *Pandanus*, one very often sees something very different – mangroves. The islanders use the wood for their canoe floats, and for fixing pegs (see p. 122) and the supply is unlimited, as the growth and spread of the mangroves are assured by a number of factors which have made them one of the best

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and particularly of Oceania, but not with that of the Indian peninsula – a fact which is highly significant in any reconstructive study of the migration of flora and fauna to the archipelago.

The most recent phase in the spread of vegetation within the Andamans is less than a hundred years old; it began on Great Andaman, but none of the species has yet reached Little Andaman. The coconut has reached it during the last few years, but when I was there, there were not more than five wild palms in the whole island. The original coconuts must have floated from Great Andaman, or even the Nicobars. The Onges at once realized that they were edible, and called them *marele*. Now, however, there is a plantation of over five hundred trees to the north of Labanar, which I established by degrees on a number of occasions as a gift to the Onges.

The absence of any cultivated plants on Little Andaman led me to try pawpaws and bananas, as well as coconuts. In 1952 the Governor himself suggested a plant whose leaves are said to cure ringworm, so widespread among the Onges. The Onges, however, were not remotely interested, nor were they any more interested in the pawpaws and bananas. The pawpaws were left to lie on the ground and groves of young plants sprang up, far too close together, crowding the original tree and not sturdy enough to fruit. It was useless to show the Onges what to do. The bananas would have grown well, but their leaves were ripped to pieces by the storms. Possibly they would fare better in Great Andaman, where the hills would afford some shelter from the wind.

A rather different result, but equally unfortunate, followed the importation of grass seed into Great Andaman to improve grazing. The seed, imported from Europe, must have been contaminated with *Mimosa pudica*, which has spread widely, as it did in India and the rest of southern Asia, and within a few years has destroyed the grass so widely and become so much of a pest that in some areas it is doubtful whether it can be eradicated. The area round Port Blair is full of it, but for the moment Little Andaman remains free.

Culturally, the peoples of the Andamans remain today, unlike their kin in Malaysia and the Philippines, at a level almost identical with that of their ancestors thousands of years ago. They represented then, and in great measure represent today, a pure hunting and

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to them that I was able to find the various amphibia which subsequently proved to be new species. They know poisonous and non-poisonous snakes by sight and how to avoid being bitten. They could tell me which trees flowered and when, because they knew this affected the whereabouts and the quality of the honey, and they knew which flowers and roots had medicinal properties. The necessity, in accordance with their superstitions, of keeping their prey alive as long as possible has also given them a somewhat gruesome knowledge of anatomy and physiology. The call of food has also made them weather experts; they know which air currents and winds bring what animals, or cause them to vanish, and what game is likely to haunt what terrain. They could tell me where to find certain fish, or crustacea, or where certain roots or fruit in season were to be found.

The striking feature of their knowledge was that it did not merely relate to what was edible or inedible. Amphibia, reptiles and birds for example, they never eat under any circumstances; but they knew where to find them all for me, and they knew the bird migrations and how these related to the movements of the marine fauna.

Providentially, the exactitude of the Onges' botanical and zoological knowledge is matched by the magnitude of their superstitious fears. Were it not for this all the edible vegetation on the islands would have disappeared long ago as a result of their incredibly thoughtless destruction. The effect, therefore, is almost that of a purely involuntary, embryonic form of 'agriculture', contrasting strangely with their persisting, persistent and complete lack of interest in any formal care, however primitive. The Onges believe that the plants which produce edible roots and tubers belong to a spirit related to Eiuga, whose anger is aroused if he sees his plants being taken; his vengeance is quick and terrible.

There are on Little Andaman a number of creepers with edible fleshy roots, sometimes as thick as a man's wrist, sticking out horizontally at least fifty to sixty centimetres from the main stem, only just below the surface. They invariably grow in light soil, where there are no rocks, and are very easy for the Onges to reach with their digging sticks. These and the yams, sometimes as big as a football, which are to be found everywhere, the Onges have to steal from the spirit who owns them. The creepers themselves,

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222 off, so that they may eventually recover, although they may take several years to do so.

The fruit they gather most, however, is the *bulumdanghe*, a wild form of the so-called jack-fruit. This ripens a little later than the *danghecciò* at the end of April, and is the occasion of intense activity. Men, women and children swarm to the harvest, returning to the camp loaded every night. When fully ripe the *bulumdanghe* fall open if rubbed between the fingers. I found the pulp very pleasant, but the seeds need the Onge stomach to cope with them. They would [185] in fact be suitable for storage over long periods as they do not seem to deteriorate, but the Onges would never think of this.

At no other time of year did I see so many baskets lying round the Onge camps, cast aside after use. As early as mid-March, impatient for the fruit, bitter but already fully grown to the size of a child's head, the Onges begin to strip the trees. When fully ripe the fruit are a yellowish-green, with a very wrinkled outer case, marked off as it were into tiny compartments, geometrical in shape, and mostly pentagonal. If one presses a finger on one of these it goes through into the fruit, which has the appearance of innumerable tiny cells, all separated by a membrane, each terminating in a seed at the central core of the fruit. The cells are an orange-yellow on the surface, becoming a very pale yellow inside when the pulp becomes softer. The seeds are covered by a sweetish orange skin, and are arranged regularly along the core, which is itself an extension of the stout, woody stalk.

The best parts to eat are the seeds and their sweetish skin. When the fruits are still unripe, sour, and hard, enormous quantities have to be gathered and carried to the camp where they are boiled until they are soft enough to open. The seeds are taken out and all the rest of the fruit is thrown away. When properly ripe, on the other hand, the seeds in their skins can be extracted on the spot, leaving the weight of the useless residue behind, lying in heaps under the tree. For eating, the skins are slit open with a *Cyrena* shell, the seeds [252] extracted, and the skins and seeds piled up separately on huge leaves. The leaves are then tied up with the usual cords of vegetable fibres, and the bags laid on hot ashes. The skins turn into a sticky paste, not bad tasting, and the roasted seeds are greatly improved to our taste, though still very indigestible.

[262] In April and May the Onges eat *bulumdanghe* morning, noon and

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night. Everything else stops. *Bulundanghe* are food enough, and even honey is left for the future; there will be larvae, and bees, and nests to come. Life is good!

Later come the large, heavy *Pandanus* (*Mane* to the Onges) but they are far less important. The whole fruit has hardly any smell, but immediately it is open it smells rather like a pineapple. The separate segments, actually carpals, each in its own skin, pineapple-coloured on the outside shading to a pale yellow, can be picked off one by one. Each carpal is rather like a pyramid, with the top towards the centre of the fruit, the base towards the outside, wrinkled and divided into cellules each containing an ovule. The edible part of the fruit is very small. In the Nicobars, where the huge cultivated variety can weigh anything up to two kilos, the women spend hours passing a string through and through the heavy sphere of orange pulp to comb out the short bristly fibres which damage the stomach. The Onges are not interested in such niceties! The smaller wild fruit is merely broken into pieces, ready for chewing. The result of all the chewing is hardly worth the effort; there is taste, and there is smell, but the food value is very small indeed, and even the Onges seem to realize it.

Much better are the *gioghene*, which ripen in February, and the *ghine* in mid-March. The *gioghene* are soft, red fruit, the size of a cherry but rather less rounded, hanging in bunches from the trunk and the larger branches of the tree. The green seed sprouts out of the end of the fruit, like a large bean, but is not eaten; the Onges cut it off, and eat only the pulpy fruit, raw. They love to make necklaces, twining the fruits with slender fibres into long garlands, even making some for me when I was with them, and return to the camp every night with long ropes hanging round their necks and from their arms.

Ghine are very different. From the outside they look like small medlars, covered with a leathery skin which is easy to crack off with one's teeth. The fruit itself has three segments, and is rather gelatinous, a little sour, but quite edible. The Indians with me liked them very much and ate so many that they developed severe indigestion – unlike the Onges, who ate far more with no ill effects.

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their hunting and fishing, or contacts with strangers, which are loudly chanted, accompanied by miming and dancing, during their nocturnal celebrations. One was sung and danced in my honour; Cendubai,[1] head of the Lulera hut, much struck by the sight of me in my hammock slung between two trees on nylon cords, delivered himself of a warning over the danger I was running using such thin cords. At the end of each 'verse' the refrain '*cué-cian-ghéghechée-chéle*' (he will hurt himself) repeated his fear of the cords breaking.

Hunting and fishing episodes are to the Onges less interesting than themes like my safety, because to them they lack the repetitive refrain. In their dances, on the other hand, they prefer something else, to us monotonous, but for them always new, and even exciting; more than anything they love to dance the stages of courtship to its culmination, with the help of words and extraordinarily (to Western eyes regrettably) vivid gestures.

Birds, to the Onges, harbour the spirits of the dead, and it is for this reason that they are never eaten, contrary to the assertions of Brown.[2] Similar fears extend to lizards, the jungle cats, bats, rats and snakes. I have confirmed this among both the Onges and the Arioto. The latter even refused to eat some fat pigeons which I offered them not knowing of the taboo; they accepted the gifts, but the pigeons were eventually eaten by my own men. And the Onges whom I took with me to Port Blair for a few days refused point blank to eat pigeon or chicken.

The spirits select the Onges' food for them, in the sense that they regard everything as edible or poisonous, according to whether the guardian spirit is benign or malevolent. Given the curious adaptability of the spirits and the intensely practical way in which they operate it is hardly surprising that their benevolence or malignity coincides remarkably well with those foods which tend to promote normal health!

[1] I was sorry to learn that Cendubai died suddenly in 1955 aged barely forty.

[2] Curiously enough, while the Onges' fears lead them to reject out of hand any food of animal origin which is unknown to them, the same does not apply to vegetable foods. They ate half-rotten fruit, which I offered them, even though they had never seen it before, and they clamoured for rice and tea, so much so that in order to prevent them becoming addicted to the rice, as so often happens when primitive peoples meet a new food, I insisted on receiving equal quantities of yams in exchange for the rice and very sweet tea, to slow down their demands.

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mothers offering it to the waiting children one after another in strict order. This alone would be enough to explain the spread of the devastating measles epidemics which can attack every member of a hut.

While they love the liquid fat, they despise the broth left behind, and once the meat has been eaten, a thick yellowish soup, not unpleasant, is left in the drum. The dogs love this, and rush for it, putting their paws right into the drum, fighting and snarling in their eagerness to get at it. When they have finished licking, the drum is shining clean and ready for use, with no washing up to do! Clouds of flies descend on the drums, packing into a black swarm all over the bottom and sides, eager to finish off the dogs' work. Sea or river water is often only a yard or two from camp, but no one would dream of washing anything.

Once the meat or fish is cooked, it is often hung in the roof of the hut, out of reach of the dogs. The fact that the roof is dusty and covered in spiders to foul the meat, does not matter; earth and sand get in the way of the teeth, dust and spiders do not. The Onges happily eat contaminated flesh and drink water from pools in which animal carcasses are rotting or dogs are bathing and drinking; the dogs share literally everything with their masters.

On my visits to the island I always had to fence off the wells I had dug out, to avoid a constant battle with the dogs. I always found water only a few metres down, and the dogs revelled in it. In the east, near Nachuge, I saw Onges and dogs together avidly drinking in brackish pools which stank of sulphur, although I must confess that after repeated filtration and boiling the water lost its smell and I was myself able to use it without any ill effects. My men thought it was good for the health to drink it as it was.

During all Onge orgies, and particularly the honey feasts, there is, if possible, even less regard for hygiene. Although the honey is full of wax, larvae, and a few odd bees, their brush-stick only picks up the honey itself. They have another even better way of getting out the honey. A strip of bark about one metre long and as wide as the palm of the hand is taken from a *Ficus*. This is well chewed to make it pliable, and when this is dipped into the honey mixture it emerges dripping with pure honey. Everyone bites at it avidly, young and old, men, women and children, one after another, to the last drop.

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CHAPTER FOUR

A Journey into Prehistory

842 The complete lack of hygiene of the Onges does not explain their disturbing lack of fertility. Nor can filth, smoking or loose living fully explain the sterility of the surviving Arioto.

There must be some other cause, and this in all probability is merely biological. One might call it the senescence of a race brought about by their total isolation for thousands of years, exacerbated by being broken into small endogamous units, all mutually hostile. This is not the opinion of all (the few) who have studied the Andamanese, and the problem remains to be investigated further.

262 184 842 In the Onges at least it cannot be a question of malnutrition, as I had ample opportunity of seeing during my visits to the island. Food is abundant, both the land and the sea offer an inexhaustible supply, even to the point of sustaining life, alone, if necessary, to all the Andamanese. The Jarawas are the exception. Forced away from the sea into the forests, they are dependent on one source of food, and it is therefore possible to make some attempt to calculate the maximum number of people which could be supported by their territory. In the case of the Onges, however, living amid luxuriant vegetation, with a rich source of sea food nearby, a given area can support a far higher population, and the same is true of the Jarawas cut off on North Sentinel.

The food of the Jarawas consists mainly of pork, with freshwater fish (including some excellent carp) river molluscs and crustacea in large quantities, roots, tubers, wild fruits and honey. The Arioto, staying as they did in the coastal areas of Great Andaman, must have lived mainly off the sea.

175 161 842 262 The small population reported in the Andamans by visitors to the islands in the middle of the last century cannot therefore be

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attributed to scarcity of food, nor can nutrition have had any effect on the demographic decadence. Strict endogamy over thousands of years, and fragmentation into smaller and smaller groups is perhaps a more likely explanation of the situation. The last stage has now been reached; the Arioto, for instance, who numbered six hundred and twenty-five in the 1901 census, had dwindled to twenty-three in 1955. In that year there were only two young children, a boy and a girl (of different parents) and the girl, about five years old, clearly had a Burmese father. The boy, however, named Sirake and then aged about eleven, intelligent and alert, with the very blue-black skin of the Andamanese and typical hair, may well be of pure stock. He is the only hope of continuing the ancient Arioto line, but this will be impossible unless a girl of pure stock is born shortly.

This seems unlikely. With the exception of these two couples, the Arioto appear to be sterile. I have myself seen their sorrow at being deprived of children, and one of them, named Moro, of fairly pure stock, told me of his grief. He took me to his wife, also of pure Andamanese origin, and externally as normal and healthy as her husband, but deserted by the spirits of fertility. Through no fault of their own, the cause probably lies in both of them.

In all the Andamanese, fertility seems always to have increased from the age of twenty-eight and to end by the age of forty-eight – in many cases thirty-eight, although since none of them know their age, owing to the absence of any form of counting, their deceptively youthful appearance makes assessment of age extremely difficult. I met only one woman who, as far as I could estimate, had borne seven children, and of these only three were still alive in 1954; the widespread custom by which children are transferred from one family to another, even during the period of lactation, to 'share' the enjoyment of them, made all the usual means of assessing the number of births virtually impossible. In a number of childless couples whom I saw on Little Andaman, the women are under twenty-eight and there is still hope of fertility, even if it is late. This could happen in the case of the wives of the two leaders Cocheggi and Cendubài; these two men married two sisters, among the healthiest and most beautiful women on the island, Vaghèghe and Tocuaghèghe, both under twenty-two. Neither of them has ever been pregnant, although both are apparently normal and

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end of June 1953 there were legions of them. In contrast to the frogs, who were completely silent unless the atmosphere was calm, these cicadas only chirped when it was pouring with rain and blowing a gale, and then only at dawn and at dusk. Unlike other Asiatic species, they hopped from tree to tree between their momentary bursts of chirping, so that from minute to minute the chirping moved en bloc and made it almost impossible to catch them. When they were silent they were completely invisible against the branches, so that although we knew they were motionless we were still unable to catch them.

Surrounded by these diversions we began digging seriously. I must make it clear from the outset that in recording my findings I make no claim to saying the last word on the subject. All I hope to do is to report what I have been able to deduce from the combination of my personal observations of islanders as they are today and the evidence which I found in their kitchen-middens both of the past and of the present.

Though not as large as some I found later, the midden at Golpahar, like all the rest, was a truncated cone, beaten into a dome by the monsoons, and at the time of my excavation it was about five metres high with a circumference of a hundred and ten metres and a diameter of thirty-six metres. I removed half, leaving the other half so that others might later check my findings.

Ninety per cent of the contents proved to be shells, chiefly bivalves, and mainly *Cyrena*. As the shell content was clearly fairly constant I tried to calculate the total in the whole midden; and by taking into account the nomadic life of the present-day inhabitants of the island, and their eating habits, it was possible to reach a reasonable estimate of the age of the deposit.

Each midden can be regarded as attributable to the food refuse of groups of thirty to forty people, living at the site for forty to fifty days a year or less. Shellfish can never have been the islanders' sole diet. They are certainly not today – shellfish of any kind are only eaten when there is nothing else to be had, and then only in certain localities where it is not too much trouble to carry them to the camp. In other words, although shells formed the greater part of the deposit, they will only have been added to it sporadically. In the absence of some complete change of habits, unlikely in such cautious people as the Andamanese, we may deduce that the midden

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been cooked in the same way; the bones are never charred, but always have the appearance of being cooked in an earth oven. The direct roasting of large game over the fire, postulated by some authorities, including Brown, was never practised; the islanders preferred to go on as they had done since time immemorial, because it was more efficient – witness the traces of the earth oven which are to be found all over the world, including Europe. In Polynesia and Micronesia, and among the pygmies of Asia and Africa, it was widely used; variations when they arose did so as the result of local circumstances, like that of throwing water on the fire instead of using fleshy leaves, when there were none in the area. But the basic principle remained the same everywhere, and the use of the earth oven coincides with the geographical distribution of hunting, gathering and burial customs similar to those found in the Andamans.

In April 1954 I excavated the midden at Tambe-e-buiè on Little Andaman, abandoned after the earth tremors of 1951, to investigate the position of the beds. The custom of burying the dead underneath their beds made it possible to trace the latter by the human remains below them, arranged in a circle round the periphery. The Onges themselves helped in the work, sometimes even trying to recognize the remains as they came to light.[1] There were clear signs of reburial. The body is buried immediately after death at least one metre deep; whereas after exhumation, cleaning and colouring, it is never re-interred more than thirty centimetres below the floor of the hut. When another death makes it necessary for a new grave to be dug under the bed, the piles of bones from the second are disturbed, so that in time a form of ossuary develops. In this it is not possible to identify the various remains of individuals unless some change in the position of the hut, even by a few metres, preserves the bones from disturbance by fresh graves. Traces of the graves always remain, however, as they are invariably filled with fresh earth.

We have already seen that on Little Andaman the introduction of the dog reduced the consumption of shellfish (and hence the rate

[1] The material recovered is now in the Anthropological Museum of the Andamans and Nicobars, which I helped to establish at Port Blair. The museum was inaugurated on 6 June 1955 in the presence of the Governor, Mr A. K. Ghosh and the chief Indian officials of the town.

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of growth of the kitchen-middens), judging by the number of shells in the deposits. On Great Andaman, on the other hand, the Jarawas, unable to keep dogs for fear of revealing their whereabouts with the barking, continued as they had always done, and the gradual disappearance of their middens was due not to any change in eating habits but to the breakdown of the communal hut system. Among the Arioto, already decimated for over a century by fighting with the Eremtaga, the dog seems to have had no effect on the situation, as the Arioto had dogs as far back as 1857. Possibly they regarded them in the same way as the Onges who, though deeply attached to them and quite incapable of eating them at any time, never go so far as to bury their bones in the middens; the carcase is thrown out into the forests for the monitors and the termites to dispose of. It is also probable that the introduction of the dog came too late, when the Arioto were already too depleted numerically for any change in their eating habits to be appreciably reflected in their middens.

In both Great and Little Andaman the middens are found only where the communal huts have been constantly rebuilt on the same sites. Where the ground permits, the base circle (or rarely, the ellipse) has been moved somewhat from side to side, without, however, greatly affecting the regularity of the shape. At Totamaldalù on Little Andaman I was interested to see that although the diameter of the midden lessened as the numbers of the group occupying the hut dwindled, the site remained unchanged. Today the base area of the midden is very extensive compared with the size of the hut now built on it, but its anthropological value is thereby increased.

The advent of the dog into the archipelago in about 1857 vastly increased the amount of meat available to the Andamanese. Once introduced into Little Andaman[1] the dog population increased explosively, as the Onges dare not kill any of the pups; the women even go so far as to suckle motherless pups themselves. This inordinate love of dogs has allowed the animals to become a pest. They already considerably outnumber the human population; families of only three or four people may have ten or twelve dogs,

[1] The dog reached Little Andaman only at the beginning of the present century; von Eichstedt in 1928 noted that the Onges had very few of them.

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often extremely vicious but good hunters. The dogs often roam the forests in packs, hunting and devouring young pigs. The Onges will do nothing about it unless someone forces them to, but if this pack hunting is not stopped the pig will become extinct in ten or twenty years and in 1954 I tried myself (in vain) to draw the attention of the authorities to the situation.

The dog appears in even the most ancient of cultures in Australia, but did not spread to Tasmania, despite the geographical proximity. It arrived on Great Andaman with the establishment of the Indian penal colony and it is thus the Indian pariah which ultimately populated the whole archipelago. A despised outcast in India, the pariah became in the Andamans of enormous value, reverting to its ancient hunting instincts. Burmese police officials taught the islanders how to use the animal for hunting and within a few years it had revolutionized their methods. It led the islanders in fact, to comparative indolence; the dog worked for them, supplying with far less effort as much game as they used to catch in their long, weary and not always successful expeditions. Dogs meant invariable and abundant success in the hunt, and it is hardly surprising that the Andamanese came to develop a somewhat unbalanced affection for them.

On Little Andaman the dogs, with abundant food supplies always easily available, became physically far superior to their ancestors in India; unlike the pariahs they were well muscled, with good skins and coats, although most of them bear the marks of old and recent gashes by boar tusks.

On Great Andaman the dogs voluntarily catch and kill fallow deer. These, like the dogs, have increased to the extent of becoming a pest. The Arioto and Jarawas will not eat them for superstitious reasons, and so they have bred like wildfire, spreading to all the islands as far as Rutland. They swim well, but only with land in sight, and the greater distances involved have so far prevented them from spreading to Little Andaman.

Here the dogs have only one main prey – the pigs. Unlike the deer with their slender legs they cannot outdistance the dogs, and their only defence is to hide under the buttresses of the tree-trunks. The pig rushes underneath the tree, and faces the dogs like a stag at bay. There is no escape, only a few more terrible minutes of life. The pig fights the dogs off desperately, the males inflicting serious

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136 In sharp contrast to the termites, with their highly developed social structure, is the solitary life of the fly-eating Hymenoptera. I saw one for the first time in my camp near Labanar. My Indian porters had put up a clothes-line and as soon as the washing had been taken down, the lines immediately became covered with flies; suddenly, as though attracted by the easy prey one of these insects appeared as if by magic. Half flying, half jumping, fluttering its wings very characteristically the whole time, it went from one end of the line to the other in pursuit of flies. Many of them managed to escape, only to alight again on the line and be chased a second time. In an instant they were seized and swallowed.

Smaller, but equally numerous, are various kinds of wasps, and their presence enabled me to continue some observations I had begun in Italy. Wasps look after their larvae very carefully, continuously putting food into the mouths of the dumpy, wiggling creatures. The larvae are in fact so voracious, continually thrusting their heads out of their cells for food, that they will accept food offered to them on the point of a needle, especially if the 'nurses' are removed from the nest.

Wasp larvae secrete silk like those of the red ants, but it is used only to seal the aperture of the cell in which the larvae grow. The sealing occurs spontaneously, in the day time or at night, at precisely the right stage of larval development, and takes about half an hour. The silk is ejected from the mouth, very fine and shining in the sun, and hardens almost immediately into a tiny white dome, closing the aperture of the cell. The larva inside then passes into the chrysalis stage and emerges as an adult wasp. To get out of the cell the young wasp attacks the centre of the seal with its mandibles, not just tearing it away, but actually eating it, so that its own silk becomes its first adult meal. Once emerged, it is at once ready to take its place in the work of tending new generations of larvae. It begins by passing the food brought into the nest by the workers to the young larvae, receiving the food in its mouth from the foragers and passing it to the next generation. And so the eternal cycle continues.

136 262 Besides the wasps, two varieties of bee are found on Little Andaman, the larger, yellow *Apis dorsata* and the smaller brown *Apis nigrocincta*. The former, common in Central and Southern India and the Malaysian archipelago, builds large nests, hanging from the branches of trees. Its honey is the best, clear and golden, though

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less plentiful and containing a great deal of wax, and is greatly prized by the Onges. The darker bees, common in China, Celebes, Borneo and beyond, build their nests in cavities in the rocks, or in tree-trunks. Their honey, darker and with less wax, is more plentiful, but not so fine; when there is enough of the golden honey the Onges ignore the darker variety.

Few of the fruits on Little Andaman contain much sugar, but the Onges eat more than enough honey to compensate any deficiency that would otherwise occur. Whatever the fruit in season, men, women and children climb happily about like acrobats, hanging in the trees to get at it and the honey that goes with it. To chop the tree down is, of course, easiest and the obvious first choice for any Onge. Failing this, and their hooked poles, they climb up the nearby lianas into the branches, or walk up the trunk – an easy feat for them with their very long arms and almost prehensile toes.

Although there are arak nuts and betel leaves in the forest, the Onges ignore them. They are the same variety as elsewhere; *Areca catechu* and *Piper betel*. The Nicobarese are so addicted to them that many have lips and teeth hideously deformed as a result, but this is quite unknown among the Onges, contrary to earlier reports. The appearance of addiction in the Nicobars may have occurred after the separation of the peoples.

With all these fruits the Onges consume vast quantities of honey from the two species of bee, *dorsata* and *nigrocinta*. During the rainy season they can only get at the darker, poorer honey of *nigrocinta*, which builds nests under boulders or in crevices of trees or rocks. The Onges' real honey orgies occur, therefore, in the dry season, when the honey birds (Indicationidae), common in Africa and all over Asia, lead them to the trees where the golden honey of *dorsata* is hidden.

When one of the Onges finds a nest of bees he puts a mark on the rock or tree as a sign of ownership. None of the others would then dare to take possession of it, for fear of punishment by the group,[1] but when the time comes to take the honey everyone helps in the hard work of getting at the nest and opening it up. On one trip from Labanar to Togalanghe, on 19 March 1954, the Onges pointed out over twenty *Nigrocinta* nests to me, all reserved ready for use

[1] However deep in the forest a crime is committed, it will inevitably be discovered in the end, and punished by banishment from the community.

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thought they were weeds and pulled them up. I never managed to see the plant in flower in the wild state, as this occurs at the height of the rainy season, and as no final definition is possible in the absence of the flower it remains unidentified.

The Onges take full advantage of the plant's properties as a bee-deterrent and in mid-March they eat honey, paint themselves, and dance, twenty-four hours a day. During these orgies I have seen a group of about sixty Onges demolish in a few days ten pigs and a dozen large, wooden vessels full of honey, with basket after basket of fish, caught every night by the women, who were apparently not in the least tired by the long daily treks into the forest after the honey. I can never look back on the Onges without a feeling of profound respect for their powers of digestion!

Yet another source of food for the islanders is the cicada. On Little Andaman there are a few species a little larger than the European variety and others rather smaller. The Onges collect the pupae as they emerge from the ground, usually in the mornings, and roast them as a great treat. They are actually very clean insects, which develop slowly under the earth over a period of years sucking lymph from the roots of the trees. When they emerge from the ground the pupae become leathery, but this presents no problem to the indomitable teeth of the Onges. Inside the cicada chrysalids are a mass of delicate tissues, so white and clean that one can understand the Onges' predilection for them.

On Little Andaman the cicadas chirp intermittently, with long silences; most of the day one hears nothing of them and when they suddenly start up the Onges fall absolutely quiet, terrified of frightening them away and losing their chrysalids.[1] In a few moments the whole forest suddenly echoes with a chorus of cicadas, as they all start up as one and then, a minute later, fall silent. Their intermittent chirping is not confined to the Andamans; it is a feature of several species throughout southern Asia. At Golpahar when I was in the middle of the forest excavating kitchen-middens I heard cicadas start up every day at 6.30 p.m., and then stop until the following day. In the mountains of South India, on the slopes

[1] The Onges do not seem to share the superstitions reported by Man and Brown among the Arioto, who appear to believe in fantastic connections between cicadas, the sun, and storms.

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of Pushpaghiri ('mountain of the flowers'), I saw workmen using the cicadas to mark the end of their shift, so regular were they in starting up. The whole valley echoed with their chirping for three minutes, and promptly at the signal everyone stopped work.

As well as cicada chrysalids, the Onges love the white larvae of the long-horned grasshoppers (Tettigonidae) which are common all over the island. They are the size of a man's finger and the larvae, like those of the cicadas, feed exclusively on vegetable matter and are very tasty. I have watched the Onges collecting them and managed to see something of the life cycle of the Longhorns. Both the larvae and the chrysalids live in cylindrical holes in trees, which the larvae bore out by eating at the wood. Before turning into a chrysalis the larva prepares the way out for the adult insect, which is less well adapted for gnawing. The chrysalids themselves seem determined to take up as little space as possible; as in all the Longhorns the future elytra are clearly visible on the creature's back, with the membranous wings, and the three pairs of legs are always curled up, with the first and second pairs very close to each other. The third pair is further away, clearly so as to balance the embryonic antennae. These are very long and spring from the sides of the head, passing down on either side of the thorax, between the first and second pairs of legs, to finish neatly coiled in front of the thorax, touching the elytra and the second pair of legs. Curled up like this into two or three coils, according to sex, the thread-like, whitish antennae look like intestinal worms inside the chrysalids. Each pair of legs lies motionless against the thorax, the feet touching in a precise line down the centre of the body. When the creature wakes from its long sleep, all the parts unfold, and the elytra and other external parts harden and colour according to the species. A new stage in the life cycle, shorter but more intense, has begun.

The Onges are not interested in the mole-crickets, but I found them fascinating. It is known that animals can find their nests or their usual haunts even if they are moved quite considerable distances away and deliberately confused, but the mechanism is not yet fully understood. It is likely that the same mechanism operates whether in the air, or on the ground, or below ground. The mole-cricket, for example digs long galleries underground and does not often come out into the open. The galleries are interconnected,

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136 *fortispine*, uses a similar action on the larger bivalves. Its shell is equipped with a very effective form of tin-opener, which it keeps polished by vigorous rubbing.)

I watched a *Pterocera* attentively scrutinizing the hand holding it. After exploring it very carefully, the creature tried to free itself by beating violently with its foot, causing considerable pain. I held one by one of its protuberances, which was like a large right-angled hook. Suddenly, while my attention was held by a shoal of fish, I felt a sharp pain on the back of my hand. Taken by surprise, I watched the creature to try and discover what it had done. From a furrow at the base of one large front hook, a little to its left, I saw a tentacle emerge, able to turn in any direction, with a retractable eye at its tip. The eye, after a few exploratory movements, fixed its gaze on the place on my hand the creature intended to hit, and then the foot began to beat wildly on my hand, time and time again, causing a quite surprising degree of pain.

462 226 224 It is during the honey feasts, when the tides are exceptionally low and the seas calm, that the womenfolk come into prominence. While the men normally do all the hunting for game and large fish, using arrows and harpoons, the women, with their nets, catch the smaller fish in the rivers and marshes, and among the coral reefs at low tide. Their contribution to the everyday diet is by no means negligible, and during the season of very low tides their daily haul is tremendous.

262 825 The importance of fish to the Onges is shown by the fact that their word for it, *cioghe*, is also used to mean food in general, and clearly dates back to the time before the arrival of the pigs on the island, when fish and sea food in general was the basis of their diet.

[251] So plentiful is it that even at the height of the season the most they do in the way of preserving anything for future use is to expose the fish to smoke in order to deter flies from laying eggs on it for a day or two.

462 226 Only on very rare occasions do the men help in the net-fishing, and then only when they can completely fill the canoes with fish very quickly. I saw it happen for the first time on 24 March 1953, in the great coral reef near Nachuge, just as it happens all over the island at this time of year, when the pilchard shoals are so far inshore that there are not enough canoes to hold the catch. As the

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build it (when I wanted to acquire two for the new anthropological museum at Port Blair and the Indian Museum in Calcutta I had to bargain with the men recognized as the owners, although the price had to be distributed among all the members of the group).

The chief delight of the men on their fishing trips is the capture of a Giant Turtle. I have already described (p. 88) the spear harpoons which the Onges use to catch them. Once caught, the wretched animals are subjected to a form of vivisection utterly incomprehensible to the Western mind; they are literally cut up alive and the pieces thrown into the boiling cooking-pot. Nor have I ever witnessed anything so terrible as the way in which the Onges, in the absence of any suitable cooking vessel, or the materials for an earth oven, roast these turtles whole and alive over a slow fire. They seem totally unable to realize that animals can feel pain and laugh like children at the other atrocious tortures they unwittingly inflict not only on the turtles, but on every living thing that falls into their hands.

These marine turtles (as far as I was able to see there were no land turtles in the Andamans) yield a far greater amount of food than the dugong, and provide the islanders with both meat and eggs. Two species are common in the seas round the islands, *Chelonia virgata*, or the green turtle, and *Caretta imbricata*, which supplies the shells normally sold commercially. The Onges prefer the former, which are both meaty and more plentiful.

Turtle-hunting and egg-collecting is done by the menfolk. The method is very like that used for dugong and large fish, using the harpoon. Owing to their fear of the spirits abroad in the night, the Onges never go near the beaches between dusk and dawn, when it would be easy to take the turtles on land and immobilize them by turning them on their backs. They do know this trick, however, and use it when captured turtles (often weighing up to a hundredweight) are too heavy to carry in the canoe; the animals are turned on their backs and dumped on the beach ready to pick up later.

The Onges harpoon the turtles from canoes, preferably at night when the turtles are nearing the shore, which they never approach in the day time. When there is a moon the creatures are easily seen, and on dark nights the phosphorescence of the sea helps.

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emerge from the eggs and make their way towards the sea, led by some unerring instinct, fresh predators are ready to pounce on them. Hungry gulls and fish, and the giant crabs, lie in wait and sometimes not one escapes. 136

But the annual survival of only ten young from each female would be enough to allay any fears for the extinction of the species and fortunately reproduction takes place several times a year, often four or five times, according to the Onges, mainly from March to September.

In the case of eggs which I protected and watched, incubation lasted sixty to seventy days depending on the time of year. During the whole of the incubation period the Onges regard them as edible, like the Bushmen of the Kalahari, whom I saw take and eat birds' eggs regardless of their age or state of development. The Onges even like the turtle embryos when cooked, and the other contents of the shell. Curiously enough, however long they are cooked the whites of turtle eggs never set, although the yolk does and is excellent. The Onges, as a sign of great respect, often gave me baskets full of the hard-boiled yolks. 136 262 [123]

Turtles, despite their peaceable appearance, are extremely aggressive, and will take on nearly anything they meet. Their battles are one of the most amusing things in the animal world. The males of the marine turtles rarely approach the shore, except to fight each other. This they do ferociously, biting at everything within reach, regardless of being bitten themselves, as the land turtles do in the mating season. The aim is to overturn one's enemy so that he is quite helpless, after which the winner ambles off, leaving the vanquished to his own devices (the trick is to get one's head under one's opponent's body and lever upwards). A turtle, once on its back, takes hours to right itself, which it can only do by accident, when its frantic wriggling and beating in the air with its legs hollows the sand away underneath its back so that it flops over the right way up. 136

One of the Onges' greatest enemies in their search for food is the crocodile, *tɛboirona*, as they call it. They have no means of fighting the creature, so they limit themselves to fearing it and building stories round it. On Little Andaman crocodiles are found only near Nachuge on the west coast, in the deep waters of Jackson Creek, *To-ggw*. There used to be numbers of them in a few places on Great [825]

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136 been found since 1500. It is found only in the seas round Australia and Malaysia, flourishing round the Andamans, growing rarer towards Indonesia, and reaching as far as the Philippines.

Although *Nautilus* shells are very often thrown up by the sea on the shores of Little Andaman (though rarely whole, because they are so fragile), I never managed to find one alive. The creature prefers to live below thirty metres, where it can be taken with a hook and line. I distributed some to the Onges and offered them every possible inducement, but no one managed to catch a live *Nautilus*. The lovely shells are striped white and rosy pink on top, shading to a mother of pearl colour underneath, and when polished and shaped make beautiful cups or ornaments. I brought some back to Italy with me, but the best were stolen. In one collection in the Zoological Museum of the University of Florence there are some fine ones set in silver, now of considerable value.

237 302 123 179 Another shell which the Onges use is that of the huge bivalve *Tridacna*, the elephant of the mollusc world (see p. 114). For many hundreds of years they have filled these shells with water and used them as mirrors when they paint themselves. (The reflection is poor, however, and they fell enthusiastically on the mirrors I had taken with me. These they named *quietanga*, derived from their name for *Tridacna*, and followed me all over the island to get them.)

136 262 Two species of *Tridacna* are found on Little Andaman; *Tridacna gigas*, the larger, and *Tridacna squamosa*, large, but somewhat lighter in weight. Both live in relatively shallow water and are equally terrifying once they have got a hold (see p. 114). Fortunately, the Onges have learnt to surprise them when they are open and slash the single immensely powerful muscle, which closes the two halves of the shell. The flesh is edible when well boiled, and certain parts can even be quite tasty, with a delicate sea flavour; I even ate some raw, much to the horror of the Onges. (They were equally scandalized at my eating raw some of the excellent oysters, which they despise.)

136 Some of the *Tridacna* of the Andamans and Nicobar can weigh over two and a half hundredweights. The actual flesh is not heavy – the two halves of a magnificent *T. squamosa* that I caught at Nancowry in the Nicobars and gave to the Governor of the Andamans weighed nearly one and a half hundredweights and were over 1·3

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metres in diameter. They are now used for the holy water in the new church of San Piero in Palco, in Florence, like those in the church of St Sulpice in Paris. Two valves of *T. gigas*, rather smaller, are being used for the same purpose in the church of Marco Polo in Viareggio.

Among the creatures the Onges hunt on the shores are crayfish, which can be taken in plenty in the streams of Little Andaman, although I found none on Great Andaman or in the Nicobars. As they were so common I assumed they were a known species and did not bother to collect any. In Madras, however, an expert on freshwater crustacea, Sri Sada Siva, told me that this appeared to be a new species and it would be well worth while returning to Little Andaman to collect further specimens, as the few I had brought are now lost. There are tens of thousands of them everywhere.

These freshwater crayfish are so tasty that they have entered into Onge folklore, and their tastiness is praised in song. They are baked on burning embers, without salt, as always, and just the charred shell is removed before they are eaten. The clean fresh water in which they live prevents any taint in the flavour. I must confess to having eaten them every day without realizing their importance as a possible new species. They are fairly large, about fifteen centimetres long, and almost black, in natural imitation of the dark rocks among which they try to vanish out of sight, although the Onges never fail to spot them. The males have slender pereiopods, with claws almost twice as long as the whole body; these the creatures thrust out before them, and so slender are they that it is difficult to catch a male with both pereiopods intact. After hatching, the young, which are identical with the adults as soon as they hatch and can therefore be sexed by the presence and absence of pereiopods, cling bunched together for several weeks, attached by their claws to their mother's swimmerets before making their way into the troubled waters of the rivers, where the great carp are waiting to prey on them.

Yet another freshwater creature eagerly sought by the Onges is one that is almost black in colour, a strange survival of some remote geological era. Like other members of the family it has no scales, and the mouth, armed with teeth, is not protractile. On Little Andaman I saw several specimens weighing over a kilogram, and

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136 [222] many smaller ones, all good to eat. Near my base camp at Labanar, the men caught sackfuls of them, and I found young ones near the communal hut at Togalanghe.

There a rocky path winds down to the banks of the river Tciongarè (or Chongaree) to the south of the camp. In various places, where the path levels out, black muddy water collects into pools full of rotting leaves, lying on a bed of ooze and slime. In these pools, which appear and dry up again very quickly, I was surprised to catch a number of *silurides*. When it rains heavily, however, the pools link and join up with the river where the fish live, so that as the water disappears again any fish which have entered the pools are prevented from returning to the river, and are left lying in the slime as the water evaporates. These silurides have no gills, and are equipped instead with nostrils of an unusual type; from the nostrils protrude two cylindrical tubes, half a centimetre long in fish fifteen centimetres long, the same blackish colour as the rest of the body. The tail and the long dorsal fin are yellowish, and the long ventral fin running from the anus to the tail is whitish. There are two large lateral pectoral fins, with two very small ones between them. The eyes are large, starting out of the head like tiny glass domes. Very unfortunately a number of specimens which I had most carefully preserved were lost in transit from Port Blair to Calcutta, when some of my baggage, including the crabs and a collection of face masks of Nicobarese which had cost me a great deal of trouble, mysteriously disappeared *en route*.

136 262 226 The Onges do not eat eels,[1] which they regard as snakes, but they several times brought me examples of a very fine freshwater eel whose presence on Little Andaman I had not suspected. The Onges caught them, as they do all fish, with their bows and arrows. All weighed over half a kilogram and looked and tasted like European eels.

136 The eel of the Andamans, like those of Europe and America, has a long, almost cylindrical body and a single fin which begins on the back, circles the tail, and ends under the body just in front of the anus. There is also a pair of strong pectoral fins. The head distinguishes it from other eels, its rounded snout and wide mouth being

[184] [1] The Arioto, however, eat eels, and also mice and other small animals, although food is given to them by the Governor in return for police duties. Brown also refers to the eating of snakes and mice on Great Andaman.

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for them and feeding them on the table. As soon as they saw worms wriggling, they would move cautiously towards them and then snap them up like lightning. They became used to sitting in my hand quite undisturbed, looking round in two directions at once in an interested way. Flies held by the wings fascinated them more than anything, and they used to stare at the insects as though hoping to mesmerize them. They made delightful pets.

More prosaically, they are very good fried. Outside Little Andaman I found hundreds every day near Golpahar on Middle Andaman, and as the fish market in Port Blair was over a day's journey away we used many for non-scientific purposes.

Dugong, monitors, snakes, jungle cats, bats, leeches – all abound in Little Andaman and I had ample opportunities to study them. The dugong are well known to the Onges, but I only saw them at Bumila Creek (Cuateniabo) and Jackson Creek, where I did not have the time to catch any; the Onges tried, but without result.

Dugong (from the Malayan *Dyong*, introduced into scientific Latin as the family Dugongidae), are large mammals of the order *Sirenia*. They have a short fish-like body, with closeable nostrils above a cavernous mouth, which is surrounded by short bristly whiskers and armed with a brush-like, horny plate. In the male two short tusks hang down each side of the mouth, like a miniature hippopotamus, giving the animals a cumbersome, ugly look. The Onges prize the dugong, but rarely manage to capture one; when they do, there is great feasting. I was never able to try it, or even acquire any really close observations of the creatures.

Monitors or dragon-lizards, on the other hand were under my feet every day, although the islanders never eat them. I used to put out as bait fish or pig carcasses rejected by the Onges as being too lean, and we could then shoot as many as we wanted as they rushed to the bait from all sides. I collected their skins for various museums, using the carcasses as further bait.

The Andamanese variety is well known and it closely resembles *Varanus niloticus*, the Nile monitor, to which it is related. The largest can be two metres long, including the long, very tapering tail. As they approach their prey, sniffing at it, their forked tongue, twice the length of the head, flashes in and out of its sheath with incredible speed. Although they have strong legs they move slowly and it is easy to catch them by the tail, providing one takes care to

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in the division of all meat. Certain cuts are the property of the hunter, of his helpers, and of his relations and after them, in order, of the remaining members of the group; everyone knows his position in advance. Each portion is tied round with a reed fibre, which is allowed to dangle out over the top of the communal cooking-pot ready to haul the meat out when required.

In the case of pork the prized cut is one which comprises the kidneys and the surrounding fat; this fat is called *cian*,[1] and is very highly esteemed. Some authors (Brown, for example) have stated that turtles and pigs are always cut up with the head ritually pointing towards the sea as otherwise the meat would be considered inedible. This is certainly not the case on Little Andaman, and I have never seen any such directional ritual among any of the Negritos, all of whom practise division of meat according to a prescribed order of precedence. Turtles at any rate are slaughtered facing up the sloping beach simply because it is then easier to hold the beast from behind and avoid its bite. Ritual there is, but usually with a good practical basis.

More ritual attaches to the way in which the game is carried back to the camp, and the wood to be used for the cooking fire. Pigs, killed and gutted, are tied in ropes made of *Ficus laccifera* and carried somehow on the back of the victorious hunter. If it is not far to the camp he will not bother to tie up the snout and feet, but otherwise the front and back legs are tied, and one long cord joins both pairs to the snout – again a practical ritual, giving the hunter a more compact weight to carry.

Man, Portman, Brown and others all say that each type of game has to be cooked over a fire of a particular wood. My own observations showed that whereas the ritual of dissection is inviolable, the Onges always use the first wood that comes to hand, regardless of its source, taking as usual the line of least resistance. This is again in keeping with the tendency of primitive peoples to expend only the very minimum of energy to achieve their object. Their religious beliefs and superstitions are not carried to the limit, simply because

[1] It is interesting that in their very restricted world the Onges have few standards of comparison or words to express condemnation or approval, and this word *cian* is used as one of high praise, applied to inanimate objects, animals, and people alike. The precise qualities which are conveyed by the word are difficult to evaluate in the absence of fuller knowledge of the Onge language.

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way in which the spirits are invoked against enemies, involving the use of some personal possession – an example is the invariable destruction of the used *naquinegbe*, or of hair after shaving. The same fear of the night induced by the idea of spirits walking abroad led to the making of torches from rolled palm leaves containing a mixture of embers and resin.

From the Andamans to Oceania the chief spirit is generally imagined in the form of a giant lizard, living at the top of the sky and ruling the storms; none of the peoples who believe in him ever eat any lizard or lizard-like creature. All of them have the same sexually suggestive dances, both male and female, sometimes inspired by the monitor or dragon-lizard, symbol of desire, and often associated with miming and dramatic representations of real and imaginary scenes. These dances, with their *joie de vivre*, are accompanied by the smoking of aromatic leaves in pipes which are frequently made from natural objects such as the claws of crustacea. The Onges in fact have since very ancient times used only this type as shown in the lower levels of the kitchen-middens dating back at least five thousand years. Everywhere, pipes of this kind are used indiscriminately by both sexes, passing from mouth to mouth. Pipes identical in every way with those of the Onges are found to the east of the archipelago, well into Oceania, and I have myself also seen them on Melville Island, north of Australia, always with the same notches for the teeth to grip. This undeniable evidence of the spread of identical pipes over so wide an area long before the possibility of European contacts cannot in my opinion be attributed other than to migration over vast distances in very ancient times.

Similar coincidences apply in the case of the arrow harpoon and indeed harpoons in general. I cannot agree with Brown in his assertion that the harpoon dates from the arrival of European influences, which brought the use of iron; the harpoon points made by long and patient working of *Tridacna* shells which I found in the kitchen-middens of the Andamans are in my view enough to refute the theory.

The canoes from which these harpoons are used, with the absence of distinction between bow and stern and the single float on the lee side, are extremely typical. They are identical in peoples which have been widely separated for a very long time and appear not only on the Andamans, and as far as Oceania, but also in North